



Mayo Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY334361
Inspection date	30 January 2007
Inspector	Carys Millican
Setting Address	28 Mayo Street, COCKERMOUTH, Cumbria, CA13 0BY
Telephone number	01900 826212
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Registered person	Mayo Kindergarten Ltd
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?

Mayo Kindergarten Ltd is privately owned. It was registered in 2006 and occupies a large Victorian three storey terraced house within a residential area of Cockermouth, Cumbria. A maximum of 26 children may attend the kindergarten at any one time. The kindergarten is open each weekday from 08.30 to 17.30 for 48 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 40 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 24 children receive funding for early education. The kindergarten serves the immediate and extended rural communities. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

Mayo Kindergarten Ltd employs a total of eight staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The kindergarten is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted by staff who have a satisfactory knowledge of the setting's health and hygiene policy and procedures. Consistent hygiene practices are followed by staff in the preparation, handling and serving of food. For example, food preparation areas and tables are wiped by staff members before snack and lunch time. Children learn basic hygiene practices, such as washing hands before eating, after toileting and after playing outside. They confidently explain that 'they must wash hands to keep them clean from germs'. Younger children's independence is aided by the use of appropriate equipment to access the toilet and sink. Older children are confident to use the toilet themselves and staff offer support when needed. Nappy changing hygiene procedures are well met. Children's welfare and the protection of other children is fully considered by staff following the sick child policy. Children's welfare is generally promoted. Most staff hold appropriate first aid certificates and the required documentation is maintained and parental permission is in place.

Children begin to learn about healthy eating and the importance of a balanced diet. They benefit from the social occasion created at mealtimes when children sit together in their small groups for a snack and join as one group for lunch. Older children's independence and self-help skills are, for the majority of children, promoted. However, this practice is not consistent with all staff. Children are not always encouraged to pour their own drinks or help hand out the cups or fruit. Children use appropriate utensils at lunch time, however plates are not used at snack time therefore, children place food directly on the table. Children's dietary needs are met through the provision of the healthy snacks available to them. Staff follow children's individual needs, routines and parental wishes closely. Details of allergies and dietary needs are confidentially recorded. The contents of packed lunches are discussed with parents to encourage healthy eating. Information about suitable healthy contents is provided in the welcome pack for parents in order to help promote a healthy diet. Although children are provided with suitable drinks at snack and mealtimes, fresh water is not accessible to them at all times.

Children benefit from the range of physical activities which contribute to their good health and all round development. They play outdoors in a fully enclosed play area where they access a range of suitable resources that promote their physical development. Children enthusiastically 'drive' their sit and ride cars around the play area. They develop a sense of space as they run around and staff support children's natural urges to try new physical feats. Children practise their throwing, catching and kicking skills as they play with frisbees, hoops and soft balls. Plans shows how physical play is encouraged with daily outdoor activities, weather permitting. Children climb up the slide steps and quickly slide down with great excitement. They use the climbing frame with ease and move about the play area on scooters. Children access a number of physical activities indoors. They balance on steps and crawl through tunnels. Children enjoy the 'Brain Gym' exercises with staff. They confidently stretch and move to the music as they complete a

number of aerobic exercises. Quieter activities are provided for children as they look at books and listen to stories in the quiet area, allowing them the opportunity to rest according to their needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally kept safe and secure when playing indoors and outdoors. Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised by staff using detailed risk assessments and completing visual checks before children arrive. Most safety equipment is in place to keep children safe from harm or injury. Safety gates are used throughout the building and socket covers are placed in electrical points. However, the radiators are hot to touch and accessible to children in the play and rest areas, and the low-level glass panel in the back door is broken. Although an alarm is fitted to the inner door of the ground floor entrance, the front door is left open to allow parents to enter freely to drop off and collect their child, at specific times of the day. Therefore, children could potentially leave the building unsupervised and persons unauthorised to collect children could enter. The rear play area gates are securely closed when children are outdoors and staff supervise outdoor activities at all times. Children are generally protected by the health and safety practices and procedures staff follow to help prevent accidents. Staff check play equipment for loose or broken parts and areas are checked before children access them. Children begin to learn about how to keep themselves safe. Staff remind children to hold onto the banister and to walk in single file down the stairs. Children benefit from visits from 'people who help us' in the local community. They enjoy the experience of meeting the fire officer, lollipop lady and police officer. These experiences are beneficial in raising children's awareness of fire safety, road safety and stranger danger. Fire fighting equipment is in place and all fire doors unobstructed. The fire evacuation procedure is practised by children and staff regularly, however the written fire evacuation procedure does not contain the special measures to be taken where children are located above ground level. Children are kept safe on outings as adult-child ratios are maintained, permission obtained, and record keeping ensures children's safety.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. The rooms used by children are warm and generally well maintained. Children confidently move around these rooms and help themselves to a range of safe, suitable and age appropriate resources that are provided for them, although, free access to resources is generally restricted. Children begin to feel a sense of belonging. Their art and craft work is creatively displayed throughout the different rooms of the kindergarten and they understand their daily routine. Children's health and safety is maintained by staff checking equipment and regularly cleaning toys and resources. Children rest and sleep according to their needs. Provision is made within the play space available to them using mats, cushions and covers.

Children are protected by staff who have a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection policies and procedures. Children's safety and well-being is enhanced by the staff's commitment in undertaking additional training to update their knowledge of child protection issues. There is a written policy in place, however, it has not been updated in line with recent changes. Children's general safety and welfare is met by the documentation maintained. Each

child's individual record form contains details of named persons allowed to collect them and visitors, staff and children's hours of attendance is recorded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, contented and most settle easily into the kindergarten. They are generally enthusiastic and self-assured in their play as they help themselves to the activities and resources provided. The activities and resources support their development and learning and are closely linked with the planning in place. Children enjoy playing in the coloured rice placed in the sand tray. They scoop it up and pour it into containers. They spontaneously sweep spilt rice up using a dustpan and brush and carefully place it into the bin saying it is now dirty. Most children make sound relationships with adults and other children. Children who require help to socialise with others are well supported by experienced staff members, who skilfully try to maintain order in the activities. Children enjoy the small group activities and their attention is adequately maintained. They help create a shoe shop and thoroughly enjoy trying on the shoes and measuring their feet. Children sit together at snack time and enjoy singing the action and shopping songs. Children generally listen to instruction and understand the routine. They help to tidy up before lining up against the wall to go upstairs. Children's independence and self-help skills in practical activities, such as putting on coats and shoes, are suitably encouraged. They develop confidence and self-esteem through the interaction, care, love and attention they share with the staff. The 'Birth to three matters' framework is displayed on the wall and is used in practice during activities. Children are regularly observed by staff and written documents are maintained on their progress, however, spontaneous learning or achievement that may occur during the day are not always recorded by staff on individual children's record sheets. Staff have a sound understanding of child development and this is seen in practice

The children enjoy a range of indoor and outdoor activities. Regular daily routines are in place, which are flexible to the needs of the children to allow sufficient time to explore and develop ideas. These routines enhance children's learning and development, and differentiation is seen in practice. Most children eagerly join in the activities provided and their concentration levels are maintained. Children enjoy painting pictures and using a number of different painting techniques, such as using brushes or rollers and their hands and fingers. They enjoy playing with the coloured play dough, rolling it out flat and then use shape cutters to make patterns. Opportunities within the daily routine are used to engage children in conversation, singing songs and role play. They play with the pretend food in the role play area, collecting it in their baskets and trolleys. Staff engage children in conversation as they play with the train set on the craft table. A selection of resources is within reach of children in containers and storage boxes as provided by the staff, however, opportunities for children to dress up in costumes or access alternative toys is limited. Quiet activities allow young children to snuggle in with a staff member as they look at a book together. Children enjoy a range of physical play activities. Indoors, they enjoy the daily routine of 'Brain Gym' as they stretch and move to the music in a range of aerobic exercises. Outdoors, young children pedal bikes and ride in the cars around the path. They thoroughly enjoy painting with water and paintbrushes and using coloured chalks on the paved area.

Children are treated with value, trust, concern and respect by staff, who have a kind and caring manner. They benefit from a relaxed atmosphere and homely environment. Close and caring relationships with staff increase children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of self. Adult-child interactions are supportive of communication skills and extend experiences. Children relate their own experiences when playing in the shoe shop and with the toy train set. Young children help themselves to a selection of resources arranged around the room. Children generally relate well to each other and socialise well, as they build up relationships with other children. Staff are on hand to support children in their play and actively take part. Most children begin to distinguish between right and wrong, as they learn to take turns and share when using the toys and equipment.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make suitable progress towards the early learning goals. Children's learning needs are understood by the staff who have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage. Regular staff meetings are held to discuss the planning in the kindergarten, which is displayed in all rooms. The key-worker system is established to ensure new children form an attachment with one person. Planning is evaluated and activities are adapted in practice for the different age groups and abilities. Snapshot observations are made on individual children during activities, and a checklist is used to record achievement in the planned activity. However, spontaneous learning is not always recorded by staff. The initial starting points are not formally observed or obtained on entry to the setting, therefore, it is not clear how much children have progressed since starting their nursery education. Observations are conducted, however, they do not identify the next steps in children's learning and are not used to inform future planning. Children's general progress is recorded in the development record books which are loosely linked to the stepping stones. Staff extend children's learning and provide sufficient challenge in small group activities. Children can count confidently and can name a number of different colours. Their mathematical skills, such as calculating, comparing and problem solving, are used by staff in the planned topics, however everyday experiences and routines are not used to help reinforce and extend mathematical experiences.

Children are generally eager to learn, self-assured in their play and most are confident to try out new experiences. Children enjoy using the computer program to doodle patterns. They enjoy creating butterfly pictures, creating a matching pattern on both sides. Children develop hand-eye coordination in activities. They use rollers and shape cutters in the play dough, as they cut out star shapes. Children complete table top jigsaws and access a wide range of mark making materials to draw pictures. They begin to develop their communication skills through the staff questioning them and reinforcing their language and vocabulary. They chat confidently with each other using a wide range of language and sentence construction, and their thinking skills are suitably promoted when listening to a story and playing the sound game. Children explore their environment and learn about caring for living things. Photographic evidence shows children growing their own sunflower and marigold plants in the outdoors.

The children are generally well behaved and begin to show an understanding of right and wrong as they interact together in their play. Staff support children in their play. Small group activities with children with learning difficulties help them learn how to share and take turns, and the staff skilfully encourage their understanding of respecting each others' needs. Children interact

well with each other and listen to one another during activities. They use their imagination as they pretend to be the shop keeper measuring the customer's foot. They recognise colours as they paint and count easily up to 10, as they wait to wash their hands before snack time. Children's development of large and small motor skills is sufficiently promoted through the physical activities provided. They can find their personal space when asked to sit at the table at snack time and can negotiate their own space when playing with equipment outside in the play area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's understanding of equality is satisfactorily promoted through activities that encourage equal play. Children are encouraged to play harmoniously together. They learn to share and take turns when playing games within the small group activities. Children are familiar with the routine. They line up in the main playroom in their designated groups ready to go to upstairs, and they help tidy up before they move into another room. Children begin to value each others' contributions in small group time activities. They listen to their friends as they take part in the matching sounds activity. Children begin to develop sound relationships with each other, as they share experiences at mealtimes. They form appropriate relationships with the staff who are on hand to help, praise and support the children during the session. Children's individual care needs are known and met by staff in discussion with their parents. Children begin to become aware of the wider society as they explore their own cultures and traditions and those of others', such as Chinese New Year and Divali.

The children behave reasonably well. They generally respond to staff's positive strategies, such as giving time to listen, praising achievements and providing individual support and comfort. Children with learning difficulties are supported by staff in helping them to learn to cooperate with other children in activities. Children become aware of their own needs and the needs of others. They show a willingness to put on their own shoes after playing in shop role play area. Children make suitable choices and decisions about their play from the activities provided. Their confidence and self-assurance is promoted by staff constantly praising achievement. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit from the satisfactory partnership with parents and carers. Children settle well into the kindergarten, supported by the induction arrangements agreed with their parents. Parents and children are made very welcome. They are extremely happy with the care and education their child receives, and praise the friendliness of the staff working with their children. Children's activities are shared with parents both verbally and within written progress and development books. Their individual care needs are discussed and recorded at registration, including any specific requests and requirements for individual children. Parents are provided with a welcome pack on registering their child, containing a wealth of information about the setting and the care and activities provided. Information about the weekly activities and planning for the Foundation Stage is clearly displayed in the craft room. Children's activities and learning experiences are shared with parents on collection. Their steady progress is welcomed by parents, and opportunities to extend and reinforce children's learning potential at home are fully

promoted. Information is available on the noticeboard, such as the complaints procedure, and a system for recording complaints is established.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are appropriately cared for by adults who have a clear sense of purpose and a commitment to continual improvement. Most staff are qualified, experienced and hold appropriate early years first aid certificates. The recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with a sound knowledge and understanding of child development. All staff have undergone appropriate checks robustly completed by the manager. A staff appraisal system is in place and the induction procedure ensures the kindergarten policies and procedures are applied. Individual training needs are recognised and continual training and development encouraged. Staff meetings are encouraged to make sure continuity is maintained and information and basic planning developed in the interest of the children. Staff use appropriate behaviour management techniques which are consistently applied in practice. Members of staff work well together as a team and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The premises are organised according to the topics planned for and play opportunities are created to ensure that children progress and achieve. However, children's access to toys and resources is restricted and the provision of a continuous play environment is not established. Children are provided with natural materials to enable investigation and exploration, however, they do not access text labels to enable recognition of what is in the containers and drawers. Children access a wide range of suitable books as they relax in the quiet areas. Documentation that ensures the efficient and safe management of the provision and contributes to the health, safety and well-being of children is in place.

Leadership and management of the nursery education provided for children is satisfactory. An all inclusive environment is encouraged and all children are included and treated with equal concern. Children make suitable progress towards the early learning goals from within the learning experiences provided for them. The manager has a commitment to development and improvement. This is shown through lead teacher reports and minutes of staff meetings. Planning is effective and builds upon children's interests and experiences. Written observations are used to highlight areas of progress and development, however, the next step in children's learning is not identified. The manager motivates staff well. Staff work well as a team to promote children's development and the general care and routines of the kindergarten. Regular daily routines are followed. Children's personal information is collected and recorded. Their individual needs are known and children are well supported. Parents are provided with an appropriate amount of information about the provision. Staff inform parents about their child's day as they collect their child from the kindergarten, and written development books and photographic evidence of children at play are available.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration, 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 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 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):

- make sure the hazards identified on the premises are minimised
- make sure the fire evacuation procedure clearly defines the special measures to be taken when children are located above ground level
- make sure an effective system is in place for managing access to the premises and children cannot leave the premises unsupervised.

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):

- make sure children's initial starting points are identified and observation and assessment identifies the next steps in children's learning in order to plan to help children make progress
- make sure spontaneous observations and assessments are recorded
- make sure learning opportunities are further developed within everyday routines and activities to help promote children's interest in mathematical experiences.

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