



Cherubs Day Nursery and Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	254602
Inspection date	17 October 2005
Inspector	Diana Pidgeon
Setting Address	Executive House, St. Albans Road, Bulwell, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG6 9FT
Telephone number	0115 9795975
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Registered person	Cherubs Day Nurseries 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 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?

Cherubs Day Nursery and Pre-School opened in 1993. It is one of a group of privately owned nurseries offering full and part-time care. It operates from a single storey building in Bulwell, close to the city hospital and on regular bus routes into Nottingham. The children are grouped in five areas according to their age and development with toilets or changing facilities nearby. Adjacent to the building is an enclosed outdoor play area that is shared by all the children. It has an all-weather

safety surface and veranda. The nursery is attended by children from across Nottingham.

There are currently 133 children on roll. This includes 32 children who are in receipt of nursery funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions or days. The setting has systems in place to support children with special educational needs and for those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open every weekday except Bank holidays and is closed for 1 week at Christmas. Opening hours are 07:30 until 18:00. There are 15 staff, 12 of whom have early years qualifications, who work with the children. The nursery employs additional ancillary staff to support the childcare workers. The setting is a member of the Day Nurseries Association and receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is effectively promoted as staff are vigilant about preventing cross-infection. Health and hygiene procedures are rigorously followed in all areas of the nursery with staff taking appropriate steps, such as wearing protective clothing, when changing children or serving meals. Children's daily routines teach them about good personal hygiene and children take increasing responsibility for this as they grow. For example, pre-school children learn from staff to cover their mouths when coughing and then remind other children, thereby showing that they have understood the importance of this.

Children eat a range of healthy foods and snacks throughout the day. Menus are devised to offer a nutritionally balanced diet and provide children with a range of tastes and textures. Children eat their meals enthusiastically with many children having additional helpings. All children benefit from meal times being pleasant, social occasions where their independence is fostered according to their age. Children begin to recognise foods that are good for them, especially the fruits or vegetables that are served for snacks. Children choose when to have drinks and snacks, as these are readily available to them, and this promotes their independence.

Children in all areas of the nursery are active. They enjoy the use of the outdoor play area and benefit because this can be used in all weathers. This means they can be active and have fresh air on a daily basis. Children enjoy a wealth of physical opportunities outdoors, such as riding wheeled toys, playing with balls, jumping between stepping stones and using climbing apparatus. This ensures they are developing co-ordination and control of their bodies. Pre-school children additionally play some traditional games and take part in planned dance and movement sessions. Some children particularly enjoy the football sessions. Younger children have good opportunities to rest and relax according to their needs. Babies' individual routines for sleep and feeding are noted and respected, so offering continuity of care and supporting their emotional well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children remain safe within all areas of the nursery because there are effective systems in place to identify and minimise any risks, and thorough policies and procedures that guide practice. These are understood by all staff so that children are kept safe in line with health and safety requirements. Access to the nursery is closely monitored, ensuring only known adults are allowed entry. Rooms are thoughtfully organised to allow children space to play, whilst providing cosy areas for quiet times and relaxation. For example, within the baby room there is a designated area where immobile children can play away from older babies who are gaining mobility.

Throughout the nursery arrangements for children to sleep ensure they do this in separate areas where they are not disturbed, so promoting effective rest. Sleeping babies are carefully monitored and checked at regular intervals. The outdoor area, with its covered veranda and safety surface, offers a stimulating and safe environment where children can run, play and climb safely. Indoors, children access a good range of developmentally appropriate resources, many of which are stored at their height to promote independence and choice.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe through regular fire drills. Pre-school children learn about various aspects of safety through topic work and benefit from visitors, such as the police and fire service, who reinforce these messages. Children are well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of their role within child protection and who to contact if they have concerns about a child. This ensures children's overall welfare is promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery and achieve well. Staff know the children as individuals and offer high levels of support to ensure they develop independence and confidence. For example, the youngest children take delight in operating a singing and dancing toy and quickly learn that it will move when the foot or hand is touched. Staff support this play sensitively, offering guidance and praise and this encourages children to practise their new skills. Children make good progress in developing communication skills as staff spend time talking to them and providing activities that extend their use of language. Children sing a large repertoire of songs and enjoy story times. All children benefit from a range of sensory activities, appropriate to their age and ability, that encourage them to explore. Babies feel paint with their hands and feet, each responding differently to how the paint feels on their skin. Toddlers mix, scoop and squeeze coloured rice pudding through their hands, carefully watching how it falls back onto the tray. Staff maintain warm and friendly relationships with the children and spend their time closely involved with them. Children are cared for in developmentally appropriate base areas, each of which is well-resourced with a very good range of toys and activities that help children explore and make sense of their world. The transition between rooms is planned and thoughtfully organised to ensure children are developmentally ready to move and are

supported to settle in their new group. Babies and young children are beginning to benefit from planning and assessment systems based around the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff are currently attending training to enhance their knowledge in this area as this is not yet fully developed.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are interested in the wide range of activities provided, which ensures they remain engaged and are motivated to learn. The broad range of resources and activities available each day ensures that they make good progress in all areas of learning. Children's personal and social skills are a particular strength as they rapidly develop confidence and independence. They make decisions, for example deciding which activity they wish to use, and select resources independently. They work well together and know the importance of co-operation, such as when two children work together to build a boat. They are confident and skilled speakers, using words effectively to share their experiences in a small group or to negotiate roles within imaginary play. Children enjoy listening to stories and select books to look at for their own enjoyment or to locate information, such as checking how many legs a spider has. Children enjoy mark making and older children are making progress in linking sounds to letters. All children use numbers and mathematical language confidently within their play because this is readily encouraged by the staff. Consequently children count competently and begin to solve number problems as they recognise how many more children can play in a designated area. They enjoy sorting balls into colours and comparing capacity and weight while playing in the water tray, which helps them to confidently use a variety of mathematical terms. Children are curious and like to explore and question. For example, when playing with dough children question what makes it sticky and experiment changing the texture by adding flour. They show interest in spiders and living things, recall a visit to the nursery by the local policeman and fire service and remember some celebrated festivals that are relevant to them. The use of such activities helps them to make sense of the world in which they live. Some children enjoy using the computer. However, this is currently not effectively planned or monitored to fully support all children's learning. Children's physical skills are well developed through the daily use of a range of outdoor equipment that promotes their awareness of space and movement. Indoors, children develop hand-eye co-ordination through activities such as hammering large nails into wood. This activity inspires certain children who remain on task for an extended period and show obvious pleasure in their achievements, so raising their self-esteem. Children have good imaginations which are encouraged through the use of small world play, creative materials, music and dance. Children act out a scenario relating to putting out a house fire as they play with a small world scene, demonstrating how they make up their own stories based on what they know and have heard. Effective planning covers all areas of learning and regular observations of the children inform the assessment records. This means staff have a good idea of what children need to learn next. Good levels of staff support means children receive a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities which means children learn through play. While small group activities engage and interest all children, at times large group activities fail to keep all of the children involved. Staff generally use a good and varied range of teaching techniques that promote children's enthusiasm for learning. They use

effective questioning techniques that help children think and reason within their play, so promoting their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed into the nursery where a variety of positive steps are taken to help them settle. For example, children see lots of displays and photographs that reflect the activities they have undertaken and they use individually named coat pegs and trays for their work. This helps children develop self-esteem and a sense of belonging. Children behave very well and exhibit good manners at all times. They learn to play harmoniously with others, understanding the need to share and take turns. Older children begin to show care and concern for others, for example, by helping a younger child to fasten their coat before outdoor play. This positive approach ensures children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children's behaviour is fostered through the staff's use of sensitive techniques to help children deal with their emotions and reward systems that reinforce when they behave well. This helps children acquire appropriate attitudes and values. Children who have identified special needs and those who speak English as an additional language receive good levels of support to enable them to be fully included and make progress. All children are beginning to learn some basic sign language, such as saying good morning, which helps them to communicate in additional ways.

Children benefit from the positive partnership staff develop with parents. Babies settle well because staff work closely with parents to ensure they follow the home routine and make time to exchange information daily. Staff continue to share important information throughout the nursery and provide daily feedback sheets indicating what each child has eaten and the activities undertaken during the day. A variety of further ways to involve and inform parents about the nursery, such as clear information displays, open days and newsletters, helps to keep parents informed. The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. In addition to all the other positive measures in place for the whole nursery they are encouraged to become involved in their child's learning through shared activities. For example, older children work on a scheme to encourage their use of letters and sounds and parents may help reinforce this through assisting their children find items from home that start with the sound of the week.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from effective recruitment and vetting procedures that ensure suitable staff work with them. Clear and supportive induction processes help staff settle into the nursery and to understand the policies and procedures. High priority is given to on-going training, which means children benefit from staff having up to date knowledge. Appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure sufficient staff work with the children and that unexpected absences can be covered. Effective use is made of

ancillary staff to enable childcare workers to concentrate on their primary roles. The clear policies and procedures are known by staff so that children benefit from appropriate practice. Management take swift action to review these in the light of changing requirements. For example, having recently updated the complaint procedure to reflect current regulations.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The manager has effective systems in place to ensure children make good progress along the stepping stones in all areas of learning. Staff working with the pre-school children are supported by the manager and receive appropriate training so that children's learning is promoted. Good systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the nursery and managers have a clear vision of future developments. This means the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to improve the range of information available to parents at the entrance near the baby room. This has been successfully completed by providing a range of appropriate policies and daily information on the notice board in the corridor. This improves information for parents who choose to enter the nursery through this door. With regard to nursery education the provider agreed to consider using the assessments to inform planning. Since this inspection staff have undertaken training on observing children and this is now carried out on a regular basis and feeds into children's assessments. Based on what staff learn about the children, they use this information to adapt and refine their planning to meet individual children's needs, thereby ensuring they continue to make good progress.

Following the investigation visit the provider agreed to make improvements to the security of the nursery. All external doors are now secured and the main entrance is fitted with a buzzer connected to a close circuit television, thereby ensuring that all callers are identified before being admitted. Combined with further code pad protected doors, this ensures good levels of security are in place.

Complaints since the last inspection

Concerns were raised with Ofsted, on 20/06/2005, about access to the provision not being sufficiently secure, staff ratios and staff deployment, the safety risk of some old equipment stored in the outdoor area and a hygiene issue inside the kitchen. An Ofsted inspector visited the nursery to discuss these issues in full, to observe the premises and practice on the day of the visit and to review relevant paperwork. The concerns raised were investigated under National Standard 1 (Suitable Person), 2 (Organisation), 4 (Physical Environment), 5 (Equipment), 6 (Safety), 7 (Health). Based on the evidence obtained during the visit there is no evidence to suggest any breach in the National Standards. However, the nursery has been recommended to review the security policy and procedure to ensure that children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised and to ensure there is an effective system for managing access to the premises. 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):

- continue to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of working with the 'Birth to three matters' framework, to promote the outcomes for younger children

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):

- review the organisation of large group times to ensure these meet the needs of all children
- develop the use of the computer to effectively support children's learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk