



## Shaping Futures

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** EY221824  
**Inspection date** 22 July 2005  
**Inspector** Susan Riley

**Setting Address** Mansfield I Centre, Hamilton Way, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire,  
NG18 5BR  
**Telephone number** 01623 600638  
**E-mail**  
**Registered person** Shaping Futures 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](http://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 inadequate - notice of action to improve.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Shaping Futures Day Nursery is one of four local nurseries owned by the owner. It opened in 2002 and operates from a purpose built unit on one level. It is situated in the Mansfield I Centre at Oakham business park in Mansfield. A maximum of 67 children may attend the nursery at any one time.

The nursery is open six days a week Monday to Friday and Saturday mornings with flexible opening times. It is open all year round and children attend a variety of sessions. There are two outdoor play areas, one which is specific for the pre-school group. The 'Shaping Futures Bus' takes children on short trips and picks children up from local schools.

There are currently 70 children from 4 months to 6 years on roll. Of these 15 children receive funding for nursery education.

The nursery employs twelve staff who work with the children. Eight of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff are working towards a qualification. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a comfortable and suitably maintained premises. Not all children stay healthy because some practitioners do not follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, and the settings own policies and procedures. For example some practitioners do not wash their hands before handing out finger food, also parents are not always informed of accidents and sign the accident record. Some children are starting to learn about the importance of personal hygiene through following appropriate daily routines, such as washing their hand before eating, and after using the toilet.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. Younger children are offered drinks throughout the day while older children help themselves to water at any time. Practitioners are aware of individual dietary needs which ensure children remain healthy. The practitioners encourage the building of positive relationships with children and their parents to facilitate a good understanding of individual needs and home circumstances. All children rest and sleep according to their own needs.

The younger children have regular opportunities to climb, crawl and develop their physical skills. They also demonstrate awareness of their own needs with regard to eating and sleeping and practitioners ensure that these are met at all times.

Children have daily opportunities to play outdoors. They do enjoy the physical activities which promotes their health. Children move confidently, with control and coordination around the setting. They use a range of large and small equipment to develop their large and small muscles, as in riding wheeled toys around outside or fixing construction materials together. Children's climbing skills are slowly developing as they have limited access to the climbing equipment. They engage in activities that required hand-eye coordination such as pouring their own drinks, painting and drawing. Older children are starting to recognise changes that happen to their bodies when they are active, and that their heart beats slower as they cool down.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment, a keypad is fitted on the main door. Children are kept safe within the nursery because practitioners mostly understand and usually comply with safety requirements. For example they carry out regular risk assessments on areas used by the children. However water spillages are not always mopped up and children are put at risk. Relevant documentation is not displayed or readily available for parents or visitors, which offers reassurance of their children's safety. For example a public liability insurance certificate, vehicle documents used to transport children in and the emergency evacuation procedures.

Practitioners provide a welcoming environment for parents and children by displays of children's work and information boards, also greeting them by name, gives children and parents a sense of belonging. Safe and appropriate equipment such as low chairs and tables enable children to sit and play safely. Children independently select activities from a range of quality toys and equipment, which meet safety standards. Practitioners understand their responsibility to act on child protection concerns and a written policy offers clear advice.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well upon arrival and have friendly relationships with practitioners. The care needs of children are suitably met. Younger children receive hugs and cuddles and have an obvious bond with their key worker, which increases their sense of well-being. They benefit from routines which are consistent with their experiences at home. Younger children experience a varied range of activities and first-hand experiences which allows them to build on their natural curiosity as learners. Practitioners use the Birth to three matters guidance to plan for children's play and learning. However they do not effectively monitor children's development in order to provide the appropriate activities to move the children on to their next stage of development.

Young children have opportunities to play with toys that respond when touched, by action, noise or light, this helps children to make connections through their senses and movement. Practitioners respond to the children's sounds be it gurgling, babbling, first sound or words. They also use facial expressions to communicate with children. There are major differences between the care of children and the educational provision.

## **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Children make limited progress towards the early learning goals because practitioners do not consistently plan an appropriate range of activities and experiences for them. Practitioners have attended training to improve their knowledge of the Foundation Stage, and receive support from an advisor from the local authority; however they have not always implemented

the advice offered. They do not effectively record observations of children's learning and assess them clearly. Practitioners are not aware of the progress children are making towards the early learning goals, therefore children are under achieving. Children are being asked some questions to make them think, but the older more able children are not being sufficiently challenged.

Children are confident to try new experiences. They are friendly and show care and concern for others. Children's independence is promoted through snack and meal time routines. During large group time, some children's concentration levels are poor and they are very easily distracted. However, when children are playing at their chosen activities they spend quality time on their own learning. For example two children in the role play area, played very cooperatively acting out real life situations, both able to take on roles and extend each others play and learning. A three-year-old persevered until they made the train track into the circle shape that they wanted. There are many missed opportunities for children's learning in the area of mathematical development.

Children speak well and are keen to engage adults in conversation. Children's writing skills are not being effectively promoted, as practitioners do not encourage children to make marks or write their own names on artwork. Children do not learn to value books due to the reading area not being set out in an attractive and inviting manner. Some children are curious as they use a magnifying glass to look at the small insects in the mini beast habitat within the outdoor play area. They notice the changes when they add water to cornflour, and look in amazement how it changes from a liquid to a solid substance as they move it around. There are very limited resources around the play room for children to learn about other cultures. Children sing songs from memory and during large group time they suggest songs to sing. They have limited opportunities to recognise repeated sounds and explore how sounds can be changed.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

All children and families are welcomed in to the nursery, children feel valued as an individual. Children generally understand what is expected of them, such as tidying away toys and the routine of the day. Practitioners support children's behaviour in a positive manner, by offering praise, encouraging children to share and take turns, and to remember the nursery promises. This helps children to learn right from wrong. Children develop self-esteem and confidence as they voice their opinions and make choices and decisions. The way practitioners organise the space and resources helps children to take initiative and develop increasing independence. The positive way in which practitioners manage children's behaviour fosters their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

There are limited toys and play materials around the setting to promote today's society. This impacts on children's learning about the wider world. Suitable systems are in place for children with special needs and the written statement is taken from current guidance.

Children under three benefit from the positive partnership practitioners have developed with parents and carers. They settle well because practitioners work closely with parents to ensure they follow their home routines. Systems for sharing information about the children's needs and interests up to the age of three are mainly appropriate.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is inadequate. Parents receive quality information about the care provision, but not about the educational programme. Children do not benefit from parents being made fully aware of their child's progress and achievements. The nursery does not actively seek, value or acts on all parents' views around the educational provision. The nursery does not actively encourage all parents and carers to become involved in their child's learning in meaningful ways.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for by practitioners, with knowledge and understanding of child development. A detailed staff induction programme is in place, to ensure staff are consistent in the care of the children. Practitioners are supported and encouraged to attend a range of relevant training to further develop new and existing skills. Key staff are encouraged to attend training in first aid, basic food hygiene and child protection. Practitioners have an appropriate regard for the well-being of children who attend, they supervise them well and ensure ratios of adults to children are maintained. However the early morning routine of welcoming children into one area is not managed well and the overcrowding of children does not promote their well-being.

A detailed operational plan is in place; however this is not effectively reviewed to ensure the safety and well-being of children who attend. Accident records are not always signed by parents ensuring that they are kept fully informed of what happens to their child.

Leadership and management for nursery education are inadequate. The manager has a clear vision for the nursery with a strong focus on the care of the children who attend. She motivates staff and children, and has built a committed team. The lack of clear direction and regular effective monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning means gaps in children's learning go unnoticed. Recording systems are not systematic so practitioners have little useful information about children's achievements. Overall the provision does not meet the needs of all children who attend.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection two recommendations for improvement was agreed. To ensure there is clear planning for babies and the activities are appropriate for their age and stage of development and that the child protection policy was review to include a procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a staff

member.

Practitioners who work with the younger children have attended training around the Birth to three matters framework. They currently receive support from external agencies who are guiding the staff into putting the framework into practice. The children are starting to benefit from the new planning, however the practitioners are not regularly assessing the children and using the information gathered to plan effectively to move the children on to the next steps in their development. The child protection policy has been reviewed and adopted; this now includes a procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a staff member. All practitioners have been made aware of the new policy, this ensure the safety of all children.

Since the last nursery education inspection, the nursery has started to address the two key issues raised. They have changed the daily routine so some children can access the large climbing equipment to develop their large muscles, however due to children's attendance patterns this is not effective for all children. Practitioners are waiting to attend training on being more creative with movement, to help raise their knowledge and understanding of physical exercise. Practitioners provide more opportunities for children to recognise their own name. They have placed name cards on each child's coat peg and name cards are readily available to the children within the play room. However they are not being used effectively to encourage children's reading skills.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Ofsted has received four complaints since the last inspection. Concerns were expressed about the way in which the nursery handled two accidents. This related to National Standard 7 Health. An ofsted childcare inspector visited the nursery on two occasions and was satisfied that the National Standard was met. No further action was required.

Concerns were raised about staffs care and handling of children, the methods of lifting children, food preparation and staff qualifications. These related to National Standard 1 Suitable Person, National Standard 2 Organisation, National Standard 6 Safety, National Standard 7 Health, National Standard 8 Food & Drink, National Standard 11 Behaviour, National Standard 12 Working in partnership with parents and carers and National Standard 13 Child protection. Ofsted investigated these issues by carrying out an unannounced visit. The provider agreed actions to ensure all adults looking after children are suitable to do so and to ensure positive steps are taken to promote safety within the setting.

Concerns were raised about the way in which the provision had dealt with a child's behaviour and about how they communicated with parents about this. Ofsted wrote to the Nursery and asked them to provide information about this in relation to National Standard 11 Behaviour and National Standard 12 Working in partnership with parents and carers. The nursery provided a full and detailed response which indicated that the National Standard's in relation to these issues had been met. No further action was required.

Concerns were raised regarding the cleanliness of the setting and that staff ratios were not being met. The complainant also alleged that their child often came home hungry and thirsty from nursery and smelling of urine. These related to National Standard 1 Suitable person, National Standard 2 Organisation, National Standard 7 Health and National Standard 8 Food and drink. An ofsted childcare inspector made an unannounced visit to the setting. The inspector interviewed key staff, reviewed relevant documentation and made observations throughout the visit. There was evidence to suggest that National Standard 2 was not met, in that there was inadequate staff working with the children and at times there were periods of insufficient qualified staff. As a result the provider agreed actions for the setting to complete in order to meet the National Standard.

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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 the registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection
- ensure the registered person and their staff observed and record what children do and use their observations to plan the next steps for the children's play, learning and development
- ensure the registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings, with reference to displaying the public liability insurance certificate for parents and keeping up to date records about vehicles in which children are transported and named drivers
- ensure the registered person organises space and resources to meet children's needs effectively and that records, policies and procedures are reviewed for the efficient and safe management of the provision and to promote the welfare, care and learning of children.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person



**must** take the following actions:

- improve the leadership and management of the setting, by developing a manageable system of monitoring the educational provision and the meeting of children's individual needs ensuring this is maintained consistently to identify areas for improvement
- develop a system of planning that effectively meets all children's needs and guides the teaching practices by making clear the learning intention and all aspects of the curriculum
- assess children's initial abilities and regularly assess their attainment along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals, to establish what each child already knows and can do and identify their next steps of learning
- improve the partnership with parents and carers, by providing them with quality information regarding their children's learning and progress, and involving them in their child's learning in the nursery and in the home.

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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