

Mary Poppins Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	118620
Inspection date	18 April 2007
Inspector	Fiona Sapler
Setting Address	162 Crow Lane, Romford, Essex, RM7 0ES
Telephone number	01708 722800
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Registered person	Mary Poppins Day Nursery 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?

Mary Poppins Day Nursery was registered in 2000 and operates from purpose built premises, in Romford, in the London borough of Havering. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 throughout the year. A maximum of 44 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 32 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for early education. The nursery currently supports children who speak English as an additional language

The nursery employs six members of staff who work directly with the children. All of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children play in a clean and hygienic environment where the staff team follow clear procedures to minimise the risk of cross-infection. For example, beds are routinely cleaned after use with antibacterial spray and children and adults wear indoor shoes when inside.

Children learn to follow good personal hygiene routines. They independently access the toilet and wash their hands with soap. They clean their teeth after lunch, brushing them thoroughly and confidently explain that, if they don't, they will have to go to the dentist. Appropriate nappy changing procedures are rigorously followed. However, in the babies' room the nappy changing arrangements still do not sufficiently promote the babies' privacy.

Children's well-being is promoted as appropriate sickness policies are followed and the administration of medication and accidents is well recorded.

Children have daily opportunities to play outside with a wide range of resources that promote their physical development. An all weather surface means that children can play outside all year round. Older children are able to negotiate the space well and enthusiastically climb and crawl through the equipment and competently use wheeled toys, hoops and balls. They also benefit from a visiting music and movement teacher who introduces them to lots of ways their bodies work and can move around, such as galloping and tiptoeing.

Children are provided with a varied and nutritious menu that considers all their dietary requirements. Snacks of fruit and vegetables help them understand what food is good for them. Mealtimes are sociable occasions and are mostly organised to develop the children's independence and self help skills when they pour their own drinks and scrape their plates when they have finished.

Younger children follow their own routines for sleeping and eating. This ensures they feel secure and comfortable when at the nursery.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are able to play safely in a spacious and very child friendly setting. The nursery is bright and colourful and enhanced by posters, displays of the children's work and welcome signs in a variety of languages. Children are suitably grouped by age ensuring that babies are able to explore their surroundings in safety.

Child size furniture provides an inviting and comfortable environment for the children. Resources and equipment are of a high quality. They are very well maintained, stimulating and interesting and meet the varying needs of all the children who attend. Daily risk assessments are now undertaken in each room to ensure the nursery continues to be a safe place for the children to be cared for. Staff complete a checklist and address any issues immediately, if possible. Children regularly practise the fire drill. This means that they are aware of the procedures to follow in case of an emergency.

The children's well-being is promoted as staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of child protection. They are clearly aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and neglect, and are confident of the relevant procedures to follow if they have concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and sociable and enjoy their time at the nursery. The staff team know the children well helping them feel secure and comfortable.

Planning covers all areas of development and themes, such as 'People who help us', are introduced throughout the nursery. Staff follow the Birth to three matters framework and use observations to assess the younger children's development.

A designated room for messy play provides children with an appropriate space to develop their sensory skills. However, the activities provided do not always challenge the more able children or provide sufficient opportunities for them to explore and experiment. Other activities are generally over directed by adults, this is also evident in some displays around the nursery. This limits the children's potential to use their imaginations and develop their own creativity.

Staffing ratios are maintained at all times, however, staff are not always deployed in the most effective way. They have routine responsibilities to carry out which sometimes impacts on their ability to prioritise the children's needs. For example, at snack times, although the food is presented to the younger children, they are sometimes expected to wait until a member of staff has finished bathroom duties for them to start eating.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The member of staff responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Foundation Stage has only recently taken up this role and has good support from the local Qualified Teacher Support worker. She has a clear understanding of her responsibility and is able to explain her vision and how she intends to move forward. However, this means that observations and assessments of the children's learning are, in the short term, not routinely undertaken. Planning meets all areas of learning and the children's files indicate that, until recently, the children's progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals is well documented.

Children are confident, ask lots of questions and are eager to learn. They understand they must share and co-operate when working together. They form positive relationships with each other, and adults, and happily initiate conversations with visitors to the nursery. They are well behaved and fully understand the routines of the nursery.

Children speak enthusiastically about themselves and their families. They enjoy looking at and sharing books with their friends and competently join in with their favourite stories. They practice writing with a purpose when writing prescriptions and making appointments in the role play 'Accident and Emergency' corner. They are introduced to the sounds that letters make when they say 'T' for 'Toot' while thinking if anyone's name starts with the same letter. They learn the names and sounds of letters during fun activities at circle time. Labels around the room and name cards help the children to develop their early reading skills, although they are not always encouraged to try and write their own names on their work.

Children are learning to count during counting songs. They identify familiar shapes and recognise their specific qualities, such as how many sides a square has. They are introduced to many mathematical concepts, for example, size and shape, and mathematical language, throughout their day and, specifically, during their movement and music sessions.

Children develop a greater understanding of the world around them when they learn about the people in the community who help us. They relate tales of their holidays and talk about where their imaginary train may take them. They also discuss where they can buy or borrow books in their local area. The music sessions introduce them to music and dances from around the world, such as the Mexican hat dance, traditional country dancing and jazz, helping them to learn about their own and others' cultures and traditions. They have a clear understanding of time as they follow the nursery routine and know that it is time to tidy up or discuss with their friends what they are going to do in the garden after lunch.

Children use their imaginations when they play in the well equipped role play corner. However, they have limited opportunities to express themselves creatively or for them to explore and experiment with natural and malleable materials.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about diversity as they play with a wide range of multi cultural resources. Displays and posters reflect positive images of people from a range of backgrounds and cultures. Planned activities also help children learn about their differences and similarities, such as when they use skin tones to draw their faces and features on paper plates. The layout of the nursery ensures it provides a welcoming, inclusive environment for all. The children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The nursery has experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and works closely with parents and other professionals to meet the varying needs of all the children who attend.

Children behave well. They are kind and caring towards each other and have made close relationships with their special friends. Staff provide positive role models, and a calm and caring environment, where all children are valued. Simple explanations reinforce why some behaviour is unacceptable. For example, children are told they mustn't throw sand because it will go in someone's eyes and they wouldn't want their friends to get upset.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. They are provided with information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and plans are displayed for them. The purpose of activities are highlighted in posters outside the preschool room. Relationships with all parents are open and friendly while remaining professional. Parents feel well informed about the progress their children are making and other aspects of the nursery. They are happy to approach staff and the management team when necessary to discuss any concerns or to seek further information. Parents of children aged under two receive a daily written report on their child's day detailing when they have slept what they have eaten and drunk, nappy changes, their behaviour and activities. This promotes continuity of care.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The joint managers work together in partnership to ensure children are well cared for when at the nursery. They both spend time in the rooms enabling them to monitor staff practices. However, there are no systems in place to formally discuss staff strengths and weaknesses or any concerns they may have. Although staff are provided with opportunities to develop professionally these are not always followed through, meaning that staff do not routinely update their current childcare knowledge. Leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. An action plan has been devised to address the need to ensure the person with responsibility for implementing the Foundation Stage is fully supported in her new role.

The organisation of the setting mostly meets the needs of the children, however, staff deployment sometimes impacts on the attention the children receive. However, practitioners work well together as a cohesive team ensuring appropriate cover is maintained at all times. All the staff have relevant qualifications and experience in childcare. Children are safeguarded as appropriate checks are carried out on all staff. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery was judged as inadequate. An action was set to ensure that required adult to child ratios are maintained at all times. They have now achieved this by reorganising the groups of children and the staff team. They are also recruiting a new member of staff and have bank staff to call upon in case of staff absences. The practitioners are aware of required ratios and work as a team to ensure they are meeting these throughout the routine of the day. However, because only minimum ratios are met, this has some impact on the deployment of staff to effectively meet all the children's needs, at all times, and a recommendation has been set to address this.

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 arrangements, when changing babies' nappies, provide privacy
- ensure staff are deployed effectively to prioritise children's needs at all times
- devise systems to formally monitor and evaluate staff performances and to identify training needs

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):

- ensure activities provide an appropriate level of challenge for all children (also applies to care)
- provide activities that promote the children's creativity and provide opportunities for them to explore and experiment (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