



Iona Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	254590
Inspection date	29 June 2005
Inspector	Anne Walker
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Registered person	Iona Day Nursery
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Iona Day Nursery opened in 1992 and follows the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner. The nursery is part of the Iona School Association, a registered charity. It operates from 4 rooms, 2 of which are the self contained nursery, and another 2 rooms used for the out of school care. The school is situated behind the Bakersfield Community Centre, in the Nottingham suburb of Sneinton. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open Monday to Friday 08:00 to 17:45 throughout the year, excluding Bank Holidays and one week at Christmas. The out of school care operates between 08:00 and 09:00 and then 15:30 to 17:30. It also operates during school holidays, where there is the demand, and opens 08:30 to 17:30

Monday to Friday. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area, and with adult supervision have access to sensory and bog gardens, a vegetable plot and an outdoor story circle.

There are currently 22 children on roll from 0-8 years. Children are admitted from 6 weeks up to 3 years, when they transfer to the school kindergarten. Children attending the out of school care can be up to 11 years but are counted within the registered numbers. The nursery receives children from a wide catchment area as parents choose to access a facility using the Steiner philosophy. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported at the nursery.

The nursery employs a total of 10 staff who work with the children across the whole setting. There are 6 staff, including the manager, who hold appropriate early years qualifications. A further 2 staff are currently working towards a qualification, with another member of staff working for a higher qualification than she currently holds. The setting receives support from the Nottingham City Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health benefits from the very good attention paid to their diet. The nursery provides an organic, vegetarian menu. Children are offered meals, that are prepared from fresh ingredients, and offer them a balanced and nutritious diet. Food is attractively presented and of good quantity, with drinks served regularly during the day. The children enjoy their meals and eat well. They look forward to their favourites and talk about this with their carers. Children experience the pleasure of eating meals as a social occasion. The adults are good role models, sharing their meals with the children and including baking and cooking in the weekly range of activities. Children feel valued and included because their individual dietary needs are acknowledged and managed effectively. Babies' changing dietary needs are met well. This is because staff work closely with parents to provide a consistent approach between home and nursery.

The children have regular opportunities each day to be outdoors. They use the climbing frame, and large, climb-in sand pit, to exercise their muscles. Children have regular access to the grounds of the school, where they take walks in a safe environment. They respond with pleasure to music making, by spontaneous, active dancing. Babies have good opportunities to crawl and stretch for toys. Those learning to walk use the furniture, or staff hands, to assist their increasing mobility.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean setting. They are safeguarded from cross contamination due to staff's good awareness of appropriate hygiene procedures. Older children understand the importance of personal hygiene through daily routines at the nursery, such as hand washing and changing wet or muddy clothes, when they play outside.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean, safe environment. The nursery is secure so that children cannot leave unsupervised. Children move easily and safely around their nursery due to the staff's organisation and use of available space, within the building. Staff make sensible judgements regarding when it is appropriate for younger children to join with the more mobile children and when their needs are better catered for in a separate room. Children play actively indoors and out because of the clear space within rooms and the supervision offered by staff. For example, children are able to dance easily in response to music provided by adults without furniture being cleared. Children use play materials which are safe due to the adequate systems in place to ensure that toys and furniture are maintained in a suitable condition. Staff ensure that children have access to toys suitable to their stage of development. Although children are secure in the environment, a lack of written risk assessments for the nursery, or shared areas used with the school, comprises their overall safety. Clear systems do not exist to keep all staff informed of changes within the environment, as they arise, or ensure that staff are clear who has responsibility for carrying out necessary precautions to minimise risks. Children's safety is compromised as a result of their medication recording systems. These currently do not require parents to sign to acknowledge that medication has been administered to their child.

Children's safety and welfare is actively promoted by procedures in place to deal with any accidents. Most of the staff hold a current first aid certificate and there are well stocked first aid kits accessible within the nursery. The staff have a sound understanding of their child protection responsibilities to children. Staff access training in order to ensure their knowledge remains current.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children settle well and are confident in their surroundings. They relate well to each other and have a sense of belonging to the nursery community. As the nursery caters for a small number of children, all ages benefit from having regular contact with each other. Older children play pat-a-cake with a baby under the watchful eye of staff. Non-walking babies are also taken outside at the same time as the older children and enjoy being involved and watching the others at play. Staff create a homely environment where children of all ages mix and socialise but on occasions provide separate activities for different ages where needed. Children benefit from their carers having a suitable understanding of the Steiner philosophy and working as a team to deliver this. There is a rhythm and routine to the week. Activities such as painting and baking are repeated on the same days each week. The nursery routine is balanced so that children have times to be active and to relax. Children understand how their day will be and most feel secure in their environment. Children within the setting are able to initiate their own play. This is encouraged by practitioners as part of the Steiner ethos. They allow time for this within the day and observe and support children appropriately, for example, reading stories to children when they request

them. However, the limited range of play materials within the nursery, and their accessibility to children, impacts on children's creativity and opportunities to fully develop their ideas and curiosity as young learners.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have good relationships with their carers and each other. They are well behaved and sensitive to the needs of their peers and to the differing needs of children younger than themselves. They contribute to the daily routines by tidying toys. This co-operative environment is due to the consistent approach by the staff team, who adopt positive strategies to help the children manage their behaviour and to get along with others.

Children's individual needs are addressed satisfactorily. Dietary and medical needs of children are well recorded, understood and implemented by adults, so that their welfare is promoted. Some children who speak English as an additional language take longer to settle and feel secure, as staff are less proactive in using the information they gather to support them. Children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others is adequate. This is because staff sensitively, challenge children's perceptions of men and women as issues arise in conversation. They use relevant and practical examples so that children understand them. However, children's awareness is limited because of the lack of selection within their play materials which reflect the wider world.

Children's wellbeing is suitably promoted by the friendly relationships that staff develop with the parents. Regular verbal discussions with parents enable staff to implement parental wishes regarding feeding and sleep routines and developmental issues, such as potty training. Staff have not implemented a daily written system to inform parents about babies' food intake. This may impact on very young children's overall nourishment for the day because parents are not adequately informed about what has been eaten during their time at nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall children are at home and at ease due to the satisfactory environment that staff maintain for them. This means that they move about easily and determine much of their own play with the available resources. Children benefit from the good staffing levels, as this means they have appropriate opportunities to engage with adults throughout the day and that adults observe and watch over them as they play and rest. Staff have an understanding of the current policies and procedures they must follow but these are not comprehensive to fully ensure they can safeguard children's welfare at all times. Satisfactory systems are in place to share the policies and procedures with parents, so that in most instances continuity of care is provided for children. Children's records are stored in a confidential manner so that their welfare is protected. Children are looked after by a suitably qualified and experienced

workforce. Staff are supported to attend training in order to further improve their skills and thereby the care they can offer to children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last Children Act inspection advised that the nursery should improve the range of toys and activities for children. In addition it was agreed, that appropriate records should be maintained regarding medication, and procedures be developed in the event of a fire or if a parent failed to collect a child. Some suitable steps have been taken to ensure that the range of play materials is adequate for children to be stimulated and be able to play happily. Additionally there are further planned improvements they intend should be in place in the near future. Whilst current arrangements are satisfactory, the amount of resources and their accessibility do not fully promote children's independence in their environment, allow them to lead their play or fully express their creative ideas. A suitable fire evacuation procedure has been written and is displayed in all nursery rooms. Staff are familiar with it and have carried it out at regular intervals. There is now a procedure in place if children are not collected. Any medication given to children is recorded and parents sign to give their consent. However, they are not being asked to sign the record to acknowledge the entry. This means that the nursery cannot clearly show that parents have been informed what treatment has been given to their child while at nursery.

It was also recommended at the last inspection that daily rest routines were reviewed to ensure they were appropriate for all children. Additionally, that daily records were kept of babies' food intakes for parents. Children's individual needs for sleep and rest are now well known and are respected. Staff liaise closely with parents and take account of their wishes. Staff plan the use of space and time so that the needs of children who need to rest, and children who do not, are met appropriately. Minimal attempts have been made to keep daily written records of babies' food intakes to share with parents.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

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 improve the variety of play resources and children's access to them, so that children can more easily express their ideas and creativity, building on their natural curiosity as learners
- ensure that a risk assessment is carried out for the premises both inside and out and that parents sign medication records to acknowledge an entry.
- ensure that records are kept of babies food intakes for parents and shared with them daily.

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