

Small Wonders Day Nursery And Out Of School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY269478
Inspection date	19 June 2007
Inspector	Anne Archer
Setting Address	2a Eastwood Road,, Oundle, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE8 4DF
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Registered person	Small Wonders Day Nursery Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 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?

Small Wonders Day Nursery and Out of School Club is privately owned and opened in May 2004. It operates from a purpose built two storey building in the town of Oundle in East Northamptonshire. A maximum of 65 children may attend the nursery at any one time and a maximum of 40 children may attend the out of school club at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 all year round except for Bank Holidays and one week between Christmas and New Year. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 137 children aged from 3 months to 8 years on roll. Of these 41 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the town and surrounding area and attend on a full time or part time basis. The nursery supports funded children attending with special educational needs.

The nursery employs 20 childcare staff. Eighteen of these hold appropriate early years qualifications or are working towards a qualification. The nursery also employs an experienced cook and cleaning staff to support the childcare staff. The nursery is a member of the Pre-school

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is promoted extremely effectively in all areas of the nursery and out of school club as staff adhere to meticulous hygiene routines such as wearing aprons and a pair of disposable gloves when they change nappies and cleaning the changing area between each nappy change. Children are encouraged to learn about and adopt simple personal hygiene routines such as washing and drying their hands after going to the toilet and before eating. This sustained level of hygiene helps to prevent the spread of infection. Staff also receive training in food handling to ensure children's health when meals and snacks are being served.

Children's welfare is actively safeguarded because staff attend paediatric first aid training as and when necessary to enable them to maintain a current certificate and they are confident to administer treatment in the event of an accident. Accidents are recorded clearly and a parental signature is sought. There are efficient and effective procedures in place for when a child becomes unwell and parents give their written permission for staff to seek medical advice or treatment in the event of an emergency. Written consent is also sought before medication is administered and precise records are maintained. Staff take particular care of children during warm weather by applying sun cream, putting on hats and offering additional drinks when they are playing outside and they ensure that activities are carried out under the large overhead canopy during the hottest part of the day so that children do not suffer any adverse effects from the heat.

Children of all ages develop their physical skills as they take part in regular indoor and outdoor activities including music and movement, parachute games and other activities to develop their balance and spatial awareness. Children attending the out of school club during school holidays also get lots of fresh air as they enjoy walks in the local area and visits to nearby parks and woods. Children's individual needs are exceptionally well supported because children can rest whenever they are tired either in a cot, if appropriate, or on individual bedding.

Children are provided with regular drinks of milk or water and nutritious snacks include bread sticks and fruit. An experienced cook provides freshly prepared and cooked meals which fully comply with children's dietary needs and parents wishes. Foods are sourced locally whenever possible and organic ranges are preferred. The cook experiments with recipes to find dishes that all children can enjoy. For instance, her fish pie is currently made with salmon and is very well received. The nursery has achieved a Heartbeat award this year.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well presented, welcoming environment where staff are aware of children's developing abilities and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to avoid dangerous situations occurring. This enables children to move around safely and independently. There are clear procedures and good practices in place such as risk assessments, fire safety measures and clear procedures for when taking children out of the nursery or out of school club which reduce the opportunity for potential accidents or incidents.

Children learn about the importance of safety as they respond to clear guidelines from staff during both indoor and outdoor activities. However, on two occasions during the inspection, children's safety and security were compromised when adults, who are not members of staff, let other adults into the nursery without a member of staff being present.

Children are able to choose from a range of good quality toys and resources and these and furniture and equipment are regularly maintained to ensure children's health and safety when using them. Children's well-being is safeguarded by staff's knowledge of child protection issues although nursery child protection procedures do not reflect current advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies and children of all ages settle well at the nursery because they and their parents and carers are warmly welcomed. The environment is decorated attractively and there are colourful displays and posters which include examples of children's art work and so attract their interest. Babies and children gain confidence through routines and the close relationships they develop with staff and with other children. Children of all ages develop independence and self esteem as they express their ideas during play using a range of resources which attract their interest. However, the majority of resources and toys in regular use in the under two's room are made of plastic so babies potentially miss out on spontaneous tactile experiences. Staff working with children under three take account of the 'Birth to three matters' framework using their regular observations to assess children's level of development so enabling them to plan meaningful activities that respond to children's interests as well as their stage of development.

Children attending the out of school club and holiday play scheme enjoy organised and free choice activities which are interest led. They can select from a range of creative resources and materials using various media to express themselves. They benefit from local outings where they explore the countryside and its habitat and participate in team games. Staff within the out of school club follow the play work principles of providing a child centred play environment which enables children to feel they belong and are involved in decision making and so ultimately develop greater self confidence.

Nursery Education

Children are happy, enjoy coming to nursery and show a positive attitude to learning. They are confident and most children play well on their own and with others. Children are involved, motivated and engaged in a broad range of developmentally appropriate activities. They are keen to offer their ideas and respond with interest when introduced to new activities. Children behave well and more mature children are starting to accept responsibility for their actions. They show awareness of right and wrong and although a child may occasionally test the boundaries staff do not allow this to affect other children's wellbeing.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are confident learners and access activities independently. The effectiveness of the curriculum planning is good. Activities take account of children's interests and individual learning needs and are linked to the six areas of learning. Staff provide group and one to one support as required and less experienced staff, supported by the pre-school room supervisor and more experienced staff, are developing effective skills in encouraging and questioning children to make them think and progress towards the intended learning outcome or stepping stone. Spontaneous observations of children at play are used by

staff to plan for the next steps in their learning. Staff management of children's behaviour is good. They have a consistent, effective yet sensitive approach which children respond well to.

Children use their imagination as they participate in role play often based on first hand experiences such as when making castles in the sand tray. Other children enjoy acting out car races, dialling 999 and waiting for the fire engines to rescue them or using a pop up tent as a rabbit hole 'for when the rain comes'. Children learn to recognise their own name and are starting to associate meaning to print. They have opportunities to mark make, to attempt writing and form recognisable letters. Children are confident speakers and most offer their opinions readily. They enjoy looking at favourite books alone and in groups and listen intently to stories such as 'I don't want to wash my hands'. Children also enjoy joining in rhymes and action songs and have particular favourites such as 'When you're happy and you know it'. Children learn about numbers through practical experiences as well as during planned activities such as threading pasta onto a woollen bracelet, copying simple patterns and counting the pieces. They use simple mathematical language such as when they pour more water into the cup and make bigger sandcastles. They also show knowledge of space, shapes and measurement.

There are a wide range of resources which help children to develop physically. They use different tools with good control to make changes to materials and to scribe, form and construct. Children move confidently and show good balance and spatial awareness although the current outdoor climbing equipment does not offer spontaneous mental challenge or stimulation for older, more able children.

Children develop knowledge and understanding of the world when they go on outings such as to a local farm centre and see and talk about the different animals and when they find out about practices within their own and other cultures such as Diwali and Christmas. Waving to the post man as he arrives at nursery on his bicycle to deliver the post stimulates conversation about how the postal service works. Children use programmable toys and computers to support their learning in other areas of the curriculum such as mathematics and language while learning valuable mouse and keyboard skills. Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely confident in their relationships with staff because they are clearly valued and respected as individuals. This excellent level of personal attention promotes a sense of wellbeing and aids their emotional development. Staff work closely with parents and carers to meet children's individual needs to ensure they are fully included in the life of the nursery. Children learn about the diversity of the world in which we live through a range of exciting well planned activities for Chinese New Year and Easter, for instance, and from visits in the local area. There are walls of colourful displays and a wide range of resources for the children to play with which reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability ensuring children learn about people who are different from themselves in a positive and comprehensive way. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities integrate very well because effective procedures are in place which ensure sufficient staff, appropriate activities and individual educational plans for children to enable them to successfully experience the nursery education on offer and play a full part in nursery life.

Children behave very well and are polite as they respond to the praise and clear, consistent guidelines set by committed staff. Older children are familiar with and show some understanding

of rules while all children enjoy the security of routines. Staff deal with unwanted behaviour consistently and sensitively taking into account individual children's level of understanding and maturity. Children learn, from an early age, the importance of sharing and taking turns such as at snack time and when participating in action songs. Older children are developing friendship groups and look out for each other at snack and meal times so they can sit together. This excellent support of children's emotional wellbeing fosters their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children's care, welfare and development are very well promoted through the successful, positive working relationships with parents. Parents' views about their child's needs and interests are sought before the child joins the nursery or out of school club and these are used to help settle the child. Children and parents are able to settle in according to their own needs. Key workers liaise closely with parents of young babies to ensure that they follow their home routines. Extremely effective methods of daily communication strengthens links between home and nursery and gives children exceptionally high levels of continuity of care. The nursery owner takes the concerns of parents very seriously and has a comprehensive procedure for dealing with complaints. A complaints record is maintained. A parents' forum meets every two months to provide a vehicle for parents to influence practice within the nursery and fully contribute to the service their child receives.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents of children in receipt of funded nursery education receives comprehensive information about the Foundation Stage and practitioners regularly provide details of how the curriculum is presented to their child and detailed information about activities that could be extended at home to support children's learning. The annual parents evening provides an opportunity for those parents who can not regularly speak with their child's key worker to meet with them, look at their child's development folder and talk about their child's next steps in progress towards the early learning goals. An achievements noticeboard provides parents with an additional opportunity to share their child's developmental milestones with the nursery staff.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The excellent organisation of the nursery and out of school club ensures that children of all ages are well cared for by suitable, appropriately qualified and caring staff. Comprehensive staff recruitment, induction and appraisal systems function effectively and staff training and personal development are actively encouraged. Nursery led practices protect children and effectively promote all outcomes for children. Space and resources are very well organised and children are able to make personal choices and develop their ideas as they play. Staff support children exceedingly well during activities while children under three, particularly, receive caring support and encouragement as they begin to develop basic skills. Children's care and welfare is further safeguarded by the comprehensive documentation and record keeping systems that have been established and consistently maintained.

Leadership and management is outstanding. The management team is pro-active in ensuring that the good practices and professionalism of the nursery staff contributes positively to children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the life of the nursery. The clear aims and objectives for the provision of nursery education are maintained by management closely monitoring and evaluating the educational programme and by be willing to take appropriate advice and action to improve and develop as necessary. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the nursery was asked to develop the range of resources and activities that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. This has been achieved through the use of displays throughout the nursery; through the introduction and regular use of resources which reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability and through improved staff awareness.

At the last nursery education inspection the nursery was asked to develop planning and assessment to identify children's individual stages of development and use this information to plan their curriculum. The nursery was also asked to improve practitioner knowledge of the Curriculum Guidance to the foundation stage and their awareness of learning intentions and involve them more fully in planning the curriculum. Finally the nursery was asked to increase opportunities for children to consolidate their mathematical development. All these recommendations are being met through staff training, by providing time and opportunity for all nursery education practitioners to meet and discuss individual children's progress and to plan activities to meet children's individual learning needs.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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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 there is an effective system for managing access to the premises and that it is used
- ensure the nursery child protection recording and referral procedures reflect the current advice given by the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- provide play opportunities and first hand experiences which allow children to build on their natural curiosity as learners by providing a wider range of spontaneous tactile experiences in the under two's room

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):

- continue to develop identified plans to provide all children with sufficient mental challenge and stimulation when using large apparatus
- continue to support and develop less experienced practitioners skills to effectively encourage and question children to make them think and progress towards the intended learning outcome

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