

Margery's Private Day Care Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	650099
Inspection date	16 May 2007
Inspector	Justine Leong / Lynn Denise Smith
Setting Address	High Street, Thorpe le Soken, Frinton on Sea, Essex, CO16 0EF
Telephone number	01255 862558
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Registered person	Christine Brenda Smith
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?

Margery's Private Day Care Nursery opened in 1997. It operates from a two storey building located in the high Street of Thorpe le Soken. The group opens five days a week all year round. Opening hours are from 08:00 until 18:00.

There are currently 65 children from birth to eight years on roll. Of these, 30 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions, full day care or out of school care. The setting supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The nursery serves the local area and wider community.

The nursery employs thirteen members of staff. All staff have early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from the local authority, the Pre School Learning Alliance (PSLA), Essex Day Nurseries Association (EDNA), For Children and the Walton Cluster Group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are kept healthy at this setting as they learn about the importance of effective personal hygiene through the daily routine. They wash their hands after playing outdoors or using the toilet and before eating. Children are able to independently access suitable toilet facilities where clear visual aids remind them how to wash their hands to stop germs from spreading. Many children do this well without prompting although staff carefully monitor and supervise younger children.

Children who become ill or have an accident at the nursery are very well cared for as all staff have undertaken first aid training. Comprehensive accident and illness policies are in place to ensure staff understand and follow correct procedures. Accident and incident records are well organised and are shared with parents. If medication is required staff consult the child's medical details and ensure permission has been given by parents.

Parents are made aware of exclusion times for any infectious conditions and are asked to keep children at home until they are well enough to attend, thereby preventing the risk of spread of infection.

Children's dietary needs are well met through the provision of a mid-morning snack that takes account of individual dietary needs. Children sit together to enjoy a snack of fruit and biscuits and are encouraged to peel their own fruit, promoting independence. Drinks are available at all times, and children pour their own as soon as they are able to do so. Children are developing a good understanding of the benefits of a healthy diet, as for instance they are confidently able to state that drinking milk will help you grow healthy teeth.

Children benefit from having daily access to an outside area where they are encouraged to use a wide range of physical equipment, promoting physical development. Outside they use the small logs and other apparatus for balancing, climbing and moving with increasing skill. Children enthusiastically challenge their own limits without being over supervised or monitored. They can use wheeled toys to steer and ride, learning to avoid collisions and manage the space effectively. Children also benefit from the large undercover play area, providing shade in summer and protection from inclement weather. Children are encouraged to explore their surroundings during walks to local shops and parks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, safe and welcoming environment. The well-organised premises offer all necessary facilities for a range of activities to promote overall development safely. Staff are well aware of potential hazards and take positive steps to minimise risk, following the setting's clear policies on environmental safety.

Security is given good priority at the setting and effective procedures for keeping children safe include thorough vetting of visitors and close monitoring of arrival and departure times. Well planned fire safety precautions are in place and staff regularly practice emergency evacuation with the children. Children develop a good understanding of the importance of following safety rules. For example they remind each other to keep their shoes on when upstairs in case the fire alarm sounds and they need to vacate the building quickly.

Children safely access an extensive range of interesting and exciting toys and resources, many of which are presented at the children's height in easily accessible containers. Children's safety when using toys and resources is ensured as all equipment is well maintained and regularly cleaned.

Children are very well protected from potential harm as staff demonstrate a good understanding of child protection issues and how to identify causes for concern. The setting is proactive in seeking training for staff and they are all aware of the nursery's written procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the setting and make good all round progress. Children under three take part in activities with reference to the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which ensures that their developmental needs are attended to. They access a full range of interesting and well planned activities and equipment and are sensitively supported by staff to help them develop independence and self-esteem. Independence is also encouraged through staff allowing children to select their own activities and work at their own pace. Children are encouraged to use all their senses to explore their environment as staff place a strong emphasis on play with natural resources.

Effective use of the outdoor area allows children to experience fresh air and outdoor play regularly. Children feel safe and secure in the setting as staff follow home routines in line with parents wishes. Information is regularly shared between the setting and home through the use of home link diaries which are completed daily.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Staff provide many stimulating opportunities for interesting play based experiences. These are well planned with children's interests as a starting point and consequently children are motivated and interested to learn. Staff regularly join in with children's play to extend their understanding and they continuously adapt the level of support provided to ensure children make good progress in their learning. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-led activities, encouraging independence and allowing children to make their own decisions. Good use of time gives children the opportunity to become engrossed in an activity, helping to develop concentration and perseverance.

Planning is clearly displayed showing learning intentions for individual children. The staff have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. An effective keyworker system enables staff to evaluate plans using observations linked to learning intentions. Individual children's progress is closely monitored by keyworkers and recorded in well maintained development record books. This ensures that children's starting points can be identified and children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children remain motivated and are keen to learn as staff use a wide range of teaching strategies to successfully support and extend thinking.

Children are competently using language for communication, participating well in group discussions and sharing their ideas confidently. This is actively encouraged by positive staff role models, and through staff valuing children's contributions and listening attentively. There

are opportunities for children to mark make in a variety of writing areas that are well resourced and provide an interesting array of equipment. There are many examples of environmental print in each room, furthering children's understanding that text carries a meaning. The children enjoy looking at books in the comfortable and inviting book corner where they have access to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. Children have the opportunity to explore real and imaginary experiences through the provision of a well-planned role play area.

Children are developing in confidence with using numbers as labels and for counting. Children count out fruit for each child during snack time, this is well supported by staff who encourage children to use calculation skills in real life contexts. Staff then successfully extend this learning by using appropriate mathematical language such as more than and less than.

Children are also making very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world as staff provide exciting activities to help them learn about animals. For example, children have the opportunity to feed lambs by hand when they visited the setting. Children are also regularly encouraged to investigate a range of materials such as cooked pasta and noodles, stimulating interesting discussions involving scientific language and encouraging children to ask questions.

Children have access to a computer where their pictures have been used as screen savers giving interest and a sense of belonging to each child. Children enthusiastically operate interactive programmes using good hand to eye co-ordination.

Children enjoy being creative at this setting. They freely access a good range of creative play materials and resources from the selection available to them and benefit from regular opportunities to explore different media and materials. They are able to use a range of small tools such as scissors with increasing control and precision, closely supervised by staff. Children have access to a range of manipulative toys, construction kits and tools for crafts and mark making, promoting the development of fine motor skills. Children participate very well in group stories and singing sessions and use drama to express themselves imaginatively. Children play with a selection of musical instruments enthusiastically and listen to a range of different music on the compact disc player.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are very happy at the setting and interact well with staff and each other. They develop a secure sense of belonging as they identify their own space, for example, their coat pegs are clearly labelled with their names. Children create their own mats for snack time and there are examples of the children's work and photographs of the children at play throughout the setting, helping to further develop a good sense of belonging. An effective keyworker system is in place which allows children to further develop close relationships with staff, and helps to ensure individual needs are met.

Children have some opportunities to learn about the wider world and different cultures for example, they take part in festivals such as Chinese New Year. However, children's development in this area is compromised as there are insufficient resources and experiences available at the setting for children to fully develop their understanding of different abilities, cultures and ethnic groups. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by caring and competent staff and are fully integrated into the nursery to ensure they are able to reach their full potential.

They are learning the difference between right and wrong and are beginning to manage their own behaviour. For instance, children apologise to each other when they have caused upset. Children are also beginning to understand the need for rules within the setting to help keep them safe. Staff act as positive role models, talking calmly to each other and listening attentively. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's well-being is promoted as the staff and parents and carers have developed a close working relationship. They share important information about the children and effective daily discussions ensure that staff are kept up to date with any changes in the children's lives. All required documentation and consent forms are in place to ensure children are cared for in line with parents wishes. Younger children's parents and carers have the opportunity to communicate through a home link book

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are well kept informed of their child's progress through comprehensive formal reports that are sent out twice a year. Informal daily discussions also provide parents with information on children's achievements. Parents and carers are informed of activities and topics within the setting but clear links to the Foundation Stage and children's learning are not consistently identified, potentially compromising children's progress towards the early learning goals. There is an effective complaints policy in place and parents are well aware of the procedure to follow should a complaint arise.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for by adults who are motivated, committed and dedicated to providing good quality care and education. All staff have been employed using the setting's clear recruitment procedures and vetted effectively to ensure they are suitable to work with children. All staff hold a relevant childcare qualification to at least level two, many of which are qualified to level three. Several staff members have been at the setting for a number of years, providing continuity and stability for the children.

Comprehensive and effective policies that are shared well with parents are in place to support staff and ensure the well-being of the children. These are stored securely and confidentially. Children are settled and secure as good ratios are always maintained and the environment is well organised. Staff are knowledgeable and experienced and work very well with the manager to form a cohesive team.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. The setting is led by a strong efficient manager who is very well supported by a committed staff team. The manager has a clear vision for future development of nursery education which is shared by all staff members. Regular meetings enable staff to review the effectiveness of the planning to ensure the quality of nursery education is adapted accordingly to meet individual needs of the children. The nursery gathers feedback from parents through discussion and involves staff in assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. This ensures all areas of teaching and learning are effectively monitored and evaluated and areas for improvement identified and addressed.

Clear job descriptions and an effective appraisal and induction process ensure staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Staff development plans are detailed to foster their ongoing professional development and ensure that training needs are identified. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that staff's knowledge of the Foundations Stage be further developed in order to gain confidence when assessing children's progress and evaluating activities. It was also recommended that the action plan be updated to identify how staff training and qualification requirements will be met. A further recommendation required policies and procedures to be updated to bring them in line with revised National Standards.

An action plan was drawn up addressing all of these points. All staff are now qualified to at least level two with most being qualified to level three, and an effective induction and staff appraisal system is now in place. This has increased the staff's understanding of the Foundation Stage and children's progress and activities are now assessed and evaluated confidently ensuring children make good progress in all areas of learning. All policies and procedures have been updated and are now in line with revised National Standards.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004, Ofsted received one complaint relating to National Standard 6: Safety. This involved an accident incurred by a child. Two actions were set and the provider responded appropriately and risk assessed safety practices around mealtimes. Ofsted was satisfied that National Standards are now being met.

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 children have access to resources which reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability.

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):

- develop systems which provide parents with further information about the Foundation Stage and children's learning.

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