

Northampton College Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	220121
Inspection date	25 May 2007
Inspector	Rhonda Foster
Setting Address	College Grounds, Booth Lane, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN3 3RF
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Registered person	Northampton College
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?

Northampton College Day Nursery opened in May 2000 but was previously registered as a playgroup in 1988. It operates from dedicated rooms within Block K of Northampton college. The nursery primarily provides care for the children of students at the college but also serves the local area.

There are currently 36 children on roll. There are 15 children in receipt of funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are no children currently attending who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Three children currently attending have English as a second language.

The nursery opens five days a week during college term times. Sessions are from 08:45 to 17:15 on Mondays to Thursdays with the session on Fridays finishing at 16:15.

Three full-time and two part-time staff work with the children, supported by a supervisor. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to level 3. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA). The nursery has recently completed the PSLA 'Aiming for Quality' accreditation scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is effectively promoted because the staff take positive steps to promote good personal hygiene routines. Positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures taken when children are ill so that health needs are met. The staff follow a cleaning rota for the premises and equipment, children and staff wash hands regularly and staff wear gloves when changing children.

Children receive good quality care if they are ill or have an accident because staff are aware of their individual health care needs and all the required documentation and consents are in place to support this. All staff have attended emergency life support training and can call upon additional first aid support from the on-site college staff. The accident records are organised clearly and shown to parents.

Children are well nourished and have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating because the setting provides children with nutritious food and regular drinks which comply with their dietary and religious requirements. Children also have the opportunity to grow their own vegetables in the nursery garden such as runner beans. They prepare their own snack and make healthy choices from a self-service breakfast bar. Mealtimes are relaxed, social occasions when staff sit with the children and enjoy food together; consequently the children have good table manners and are well-behaved at meal times.

Children enjoy varied opportunities to experience physical activity and develop their skills of balance and co-ordination. They access a good range of outdoor equipment on a daily basis such as a climbing frame, slide, tricycles and hoops. This enables them to develop confidence in large muscle movements and provides them with a challenge. Through creative activities such as painting and stencilling children demonstrate increasing control over small muscle movements and hand-eye coordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe and very well cared for in premises that are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. The staff have a good awareness of health and safety and carry out daily safety checks. The children's arrival and departure is closely monitored by staff and attendance records are maintained. Required fire safety precautions are in place, fire drills are explained to the children and regularly carried out. The children are supervised closely, especially on outings and when playing with water activities.

Staff create a very welcoming and stimulating environment that gives the children a strong sense of belonging. Children have their own coat peg and tray, their art work is displayed on the walls and staff greet them warmly as they arrive. The layout of the play room and outdoor area provides adequate space for the children to play and move around activities freely. On days when the weather is good staff open the double doors so that children can move freely between the playroom and the outdoor area.

Children use safe and suitable resources, toys and equipment that stimulate and challenge them because staff are aware of safety standards and carry out daily safety checks. They organise storage units which are clearly labelled so that children are able to self-select from a good

range of toys and resources. There is sufficient child-friendly furniture including soft chairs and home-corner items.

Children learn about the importance of staying safe because staff act as good role models. They gently remind children to not run in the classroom and create role play opportunities to practise road safety. Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a good awareness of child protection, understand their role and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident, independent and are developing their self-esteem. Upon arrival they separate confidently from parents and carers and seek out an activity. They form good friendships with each other and the staff. The provision operates mainly from one open-plan play room and because of this the older children often nurture the younger ones.

The staff are very supportive and caring because they know the children well. They spend time supporting the children's play experiences and listen attentively to their ideas. Children are developing a sense of self-worth because they know staff value and celebrate their achievements.

The organisation of the main play room and outdoor area allows children to freely choose an activity that interests and motivates them. The daily routine is organised well and gives children plenty of time to complete their chosen activity.

Younger children are developing a good disposition to learning because the provision works well with the 'Birth to three matters' guidance. This framework is reflected in their planning and where necessary staff adapt activities for younger children. The children's achievements are shared with parents and recorded in their development records.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff effectively plan a good range of activities such as painting, music, small world play, role-play, construction, drawing and mark-making that cover all areas of learning. They have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and work closely with an advisory teacher.

Children are well supported in their play by staff who use a good range of teaching methods, such as open questioning. The planning is good and based on topics which link to appropriate stepping stones. It is also flexible enough to allow for spontaneous events such as playing in the snow outside or playing in the paddling pool on a hot day.

Staff monitor and record children's progress and acknowledge their achievements. Each child has their own development folder which is well organised and attractively presented. These records contain observations, photographs, reward charts and samples of their own work. However, evaluations collected from these observations and assessments are not clearly and consistently used to inform future planning.

Children enjoy their time at the setting and because of this their behaviour is good. They have a positive attitude to learning and are forming good relationships with staff and other children. They interact well and share equipment with each other. Each child has a written name tag that is used consistently during activities and daily routines enforcing their sense of identity and belonging.

Children explore their creativity when making faces with paper plates, painting them in varying skin tones. They are developing a strong sense of community because staff regularly take them on walks within the college premises to visit the bakery, library and postal room.

Children are beginning to recognise numbers when recording their height on a wall chart, which they enjoy visiting regularly. They use mathematical language during play and practise their counting skills. Children have access to a good range of resources to support their mathematical development such as rulers, counting bears and calculators.

Knowledge and understanding of the world is actively promoted because children are able to have first hand experiences to develop their curiosity as learners, such as observing the growth cycle of a tadpole and examining insects in the garden. Children have the opportunity to observe positive images of culture and ability within the environment through posters and books.

Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Good arrangements are made to ensure all children are included. Staff get to know the children well because they work closely with parents during the child's settling in period. The staff ensure that there is no bias in their practice in relation to gender or disability because all children are treated with equal concern as stated in the setting's equality and diversity policy.

Children have opportunities to access and benefit from activities and resources that help them to develop an understanding of diversity and learn about their local community and the wider world. They take part in festivals such as Chinese New Year and Divali.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are learning right from wrong and how to manage their own behaviour. Staff use positive strategies to manage children's behaviour, they use techniques such as 'time out' and praise children's positive behaviour. Children behave very well as they learn to consider others and what is expected of them.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from a good partnership between parents and staff who act together to give consistent messages. The exchange of information is effective. Parents new to the setting are given a prospectus in which they can view the policies and procedures. Initial information about children's likes and dislikes is recorded by parents in an 'All about me' book which staff use to identify children's starting points. Each child's development is effectively monitored and recorded in a development folder which parents can view at any time. Further information about the Foundation Stage is displayed on notice boards and staff are always available to discuss children's development with their parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care and welfare are supported by well maintained documentation and accurate record keeping. They are safeguarded as recruitment and vetting procedures are thorough. Children benefit because staff have the appropriate qualifications, knowledge and experience to do their job well which ensures that children's needs are met. The environment is well-organised and effective staff deployment supports the children's enjoyment and safety.

All policies and procedures are in place and they are effectively implemented to promote all the outcomes for children. Sufficient records regarding children's personal details, attendance and health needs are maintained within confidentiality guidelines.

The leadership and management is good. There is a clear hierarchy of management support and obvious involvement. Management has high expectations of staff and leads by example which has a positive effect on staff. There is a dedicated team of staff who are committed to continually improving the quality of care and provision of nursery education. They meet monthly and hold regular discussions to monitor and evaluate the provision to identify strengths and weaknesses. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provision was asked to develop the written statement on child protection so that it includes contact names and telephone numbers for the local police and social services. The registered person has reviewed this statement and it now includes relevant contacts as requested. Children's welfare is safeguarded because all staff are aware of who they need to contact if they had concerns about a child.

At the last nursery education inspection the provision was asked to: improve the partnership with parents and carers; ensure that activities provide a sufficient level of challenge for older or more able children and provide a wider range of activities based on children's actual experience of real life situations.

The provision has devised and implemented an effective settling-in policy for new children and parents are aware that they can view their child's development folder at any time. The staff work in partnership with parents to meet the needs of each child. Older and more able children are provided with a sufficient level of challenge because staff use a good range of teaching methods and adapt activities. The staff support children well in planned activities such as visiting the postal room, the bakery and college library. As a result, children's play experiences reflect actual real life situations and they are able to role-play in a safe environment.

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 Standard.

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):

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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 further the planning system to make more effective use of stepping stones and evaluations of 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