

St Lawrence's Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	218492
Inspection date	13 September 2007
Inspector	Mary Anne Henderson
Setting Address	Old School, Church Close, Gnosall, Stafford, Staffordshire, ST20 0EX
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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?

St Lawrence's Day Nursery opened in 1982. It operates from a Victorian building in the village of Gnosall. The nursery serves the local and wider communities.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 62 children at any one time. There are currently 86 children on roll from three months to under eight years old. This includes 20 funded three-year-olds and one funded four-year-old. Children can attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language. The nursery is open from 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday all year round.

There are 12 members of staff, nine of whom hold a childcare qualification to Level 2 or 3 and there are currently three members of staff working towards a recognised childcare qualification. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are learning about the benefits of healthy eating. For example, the children enjoy a good range of snacks including grapes and bananas and they have a range of healthy lunches including fish, meat, vegetables and salad. Children enjoy drinks of squash and water during their mealtimes and have access to fresh drinking water throughout the day.

Children play and involve themselves with their activities in a well maintained environment. They know to wash their hands before eating and after messy or outdoor play and they do this independently. Older children are involved in cleaning tables ready for meals and snacks. However, at times the cleaning cloth's used are not to a high standard with regard to hygiene and there is toilet cleaning equipment accessible to children in the toilets. This possibly compromises children's health. Staff have a current first aid qualification and they have sought written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for all children on roll. However, children's welfare is possibly compromised because the first aid box is incomplete.

Children are learning about a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy a good range of indoor and outdoor physical activities, for example, they run around in the outdoor play areas in the fresh air, throw and catch balls, and practise riding their tricycles. They also enjoy being physical during planned indoor activities, such as music and movement.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are welcoming to the children and their parents. There is a range of child-led art work and theme work displayed on the walls of the nursery for the children and parents to enjoy. There is also an interesting and informative parents notice board in the entrance hall. The children use a range of suitable furniture, equipment and toys suitable to their age and stage of development. The layout of the space and resources is favourable to children's learning. For example, children can access the resources because they are low reach and well labelled and kept in defined areas so children know where to go to get what they need. This promotes children's confidence and independence.

The staff check areas before the children arrive and a comprehensive risk assessment format is used to ensure the safety of areas, equipment and toys. However, at times the electrical sockets are left uncovered thereby compromising children's safety. Children are learning about keeping themselves safe through discussion and activities and they practise the emergency evacuation procedures with the staff.

Children's welfare and safety is well maintained with regard to child protection issues because the staff have undertaken Safeguarding Children training. They know what to do should there be a concern about a child in their care and they have the current contact details of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. There is also a policy in place to keep parents informed of procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are involved in a broad range of activities at the nursery. They have their own key worker who ensures the children can access and involve themselves in their chosen activities, supporting them while they play. The young children enjoy a very good range of free play and adult-led activities including messy play, outdoor activities, circle time, home corner and imaginative play, thereby promoting children's learning in all areas of development. Young children's independence is very well encouraged by the staff.

To support the development of young children and babies, the staff have undertaken training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They observe the children and use the development cards to ensure the children are progressing in all areas of learning. Children enjoy the company of the staff during child-initiated play because the staff join in with their imaginary play and they read them books and support them at the craft table.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children access resources that are stored on low open shelving in well-labelled boxes. This promotes children's confidence. However, children do not access a broad range of activities, resources and equipment during child-initiated play times. For example, they do not always have free access to paints, glue and stick materials and at times the home corner is uninviting and not always best utilised by the children during child-initiated play times. This possibly compromises this area of children's learning. Children maintain attention well and are able to sit quietly and concentrate when appropriate, for example, during circle time when they take it in turns to listen and talk. The children enjoy being responsible at the nursery and are involved in the routines of the day, for example, children pass out the cups and food during snack time. Children are courteous with their peers and the staff and say 'excuse me' when they want to say something during group time. The children enjoy chatting with their peers during role play and imaginary play time. They help one another to put on the dressing-up clothes and say 'come on let's go to the post office' as they move about the areas.

Children enjoy a good range of books in a comfortable book area. They have good access to mark-making resources which are available during imaginary play. The writing areas provide children with opportunities for scribbling on sheets of paper and diaries. Children enjoy singing and rhyming activities with the staff and they share books and talk about familiar stories that they enjoy. The children explore mathematical concepts as they build towers until they become high and split them into two to ensure they do not fall down. They are finding out about the concept of time and the past as they look at buildings in the local areas. Children count in meaningful ways, such as how many girls and boys are here today. They add and subtract with the support of the staff who encourage the children to think about one more and one less when they play at the activity tables.

The children are learning about the world around them as they explore festivals throughout the year, for example, they have explored Diwali and Chinese New Year. Children effectively explore information communication technology including programmable toys. The computer is accessible to them throughout the day. Also, children have sufficient opportunities to explore a range of objects and materials that work in different ways for different purposes, for example, as they explore how whisks work during baking activities.

The children enjoy a good range of physical play including running around the outdoor play areas in the fresh air with their peers, throwing, kicking and catching small and large balls and riding their tricycles. They also explore a range of indoor physical play as they enjoy expressing themselves through music and movement activities. Children have access to a range of tools and equipment, such as scissors, pencils and crayons. They also enjoy moulding dough using their hands and a range of cutting and rolling equipment. Children thoroughly enjoy involving themselves in imaginary and role play activities. The resources are accessible and children can dress-up as a range of characters.

The staff are good role models for children. They talk to the children in a quiet voice and encourage them to take turns at listening and talking. This creates a relaxing and accepting atmosphere where the children can hear and be heard. Staff spend much of their time directly with the children joining in and asking the children open questions to extend and consolidate their learning. The staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning and they are suitably qualified and experienced. They know how young children learn, for example, they provide an interesting and varied curriculum and they ensure there is sufficient time for children to extend their learning and promote progression. Staff ensure that children freely access the resources to make choices about what they want to do. However, staff do not always ensure children have access to an extensive range of resources, equipment and activities during child-initiated play times. This possibly compromises this area of children's learning.

Staff work well as a team and meet regularly to discuss issues about the curriculum and the children attending. Planning and assessment is good and the plans include what the children will get out of activities and which stepping stones are being covered through the activities. The planning is informed by what children can already do and the areas the children need to develop further. Staff ensure children access a good range of resources and activities throughout the session. There are sound strategies in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or whom speak English as an additional language. The staff have previous experience of caring for children who may need further support in these areas and they would seek the assistance of parents and other professionals to ensure consistency and inclusion of all children on roll.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children are very well behaved. They show regard for one another and are aware of the concept of feelings as they discuss and explore this during planned activities. Children learn about the benefits of good behaviour because they are praised throughout the session and are involved in the routines of the nursery. For example, they take responsibility for counting out the cups and handing out snacks. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children have good access to a range of resources and activities that positively reflect diversity. They enjoy playing with a range of cultural dolls, puzzles, dressing-up clothes, small world people and a range of books depicting people of other cultures and people with disabilities. The children also enjoy activities exploring a range of festivals including Chinese New Year and Diwali. There are good strategies in place for supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There is a range of policies in place to keep the parents informed about the service provided. Parents access an informative notice board which displays the policies and a range of information

about the curriculum and planning. There is good two-way exchange of information between the staff and the parents who discuss issues about the child during drop off and pick up times. Parents are also invited to attend parents evenings to meet their child's key worker and discuss any concerns.

Partnerships with parents and carers is good. The staff keep the parents informed about their child's developmental progression through discussion, confidential meetings and through free access to their child's development files. The parents are also provided with information which encourages them to continue with their child's learning at home. All parents have received the groups prospectus. There is a clear complaints procedure in place.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. The management and staff team have a clear overview of the provision for nursery education and are aware of what they need to do in order to continue to provide and improve on, good opportunities for children's development. Staff have evaluated changes made since the last inspection to ensure children's learning opportunities have been further improved. The staff attend regular training opportunities as supported by the management. This has a positive impact on the care and learning of all children. The provision for education is well monitored because the staff evaluate short, medium and long-term plans, observe the children at play and use their starting points to inform forward planning and encourage progression. All staff have a good understanding of the concept of equality of opportunity and they work well together to ensure the inclusion of all children. Overall, children's needs are met.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment where they are encouraged to choose what they would like to do. Staff are experienced and qualified and have been appropriately checked by the management who have implemented rigorous procedures for vetting and recruitment. To ensure children's welfare, required documentation is kept up to date, accurate and signed by both parties. This includes accident, incident and medication records. There is an appropriate induction procedure in place which includes ensuring new staff are aware of the groups policies and procedures and that they are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The register shows the attendance of all children on roll and the staff. The staff check the identity of visitors who are required to sign the visitors book.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the nursery was asked to address a number of recommendations and one key issue. They were asked to ensure nappy changing facilities and hand washing procedures meet environmental health criteria. They addressed this by ensuring children always wash their hands after messy play, following each visit to the toilet and before they eat. Nappy change procedures were improved to include the use of gloves and aprons by staff to minimise cross-infection, the installation of a new disposable nappy bucket and the use of an extractor fan throughout the day. Children's health is now maintained. The group was asked to make available to parents a written procedure with regard to complaints. Following staff training, this was implemented. The parents now have free access to the displayed procedures, which outlines the contact details of Ofsted as the regulator, thereby ensuring children's welfare is maintained. The group was asked to make sure the premises are secure and that children are unable to leave them unsupervised. Risk assessment was carried out and a new security chain

was fixed to the school room door to ensure children cannot override the emergency exit lock. Children's safety is now maintained.

Finally, the group was asked to evaluate and improve the assessment of children's progress and use the information gained from assessments to plan how children move to the next stage in their development. They addressed this by improving the information gathered about each individual child. The key workers talk to the parents before the time of entry and observe the children at play, using the information gained as each child's starting point. There are ongoing discussions with parents through parents evenings and daily chats and children are frequently observed at play to ensure the staff are up to date with each child's ongoing progression. This ensures staff know the developmental stage of each child and they can plan for their developmental progression. Children are now supported well through these procedures and are progressing well in all areas of their development.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- identify and minimise health hazards and provide a complete first aid box
- identify and minimise safety hazards in the indoor areas.

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):

- improve children's access to an extensive range of resources and activities during child-initiated play times.

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