

Oakdale Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	306439
Inspection date	14 August 2007
Inspector	Elizabeth Margaret Grocott
Setting Address	Oakdale Road, Wallasey, CH44 7HN
Telephone number	0151 630 0105
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Registered person	Oakdale Opportunities Ltd
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?

Oakdale Nursery and out of school club was registered in 1998 and is owned and managed privately. The nursery operates from a building formerly used as a chapel in Wallasey, on the Wirral peninsular. All children's facilities are on the ground floor and wheelchair access is provided. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. The setting is open from 07.30 to 18.00 five days a week all year round, with the exception of public holidays. There are currently 68 children aged from birth to under 5 years on roll in the nursery and nine children under eight on roll in the out of school club. There are 18 children receiving funding for nursery education. Most children attending live in the local area.

There are currently 18 staff who work with the children, on a full and part-time basis. Most of the staff have appropriate early years qualifications or are working towards one. The setting receives support from an early year's advisory teacher.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are cared for in a welcoming, clean environment where they learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well planned routines. They know they need to wash their hands before snack and lunch times and after creative play sessions and using the toilet. Children's health is protected by the successful implementation of policies and procedures. However, some staff do not take positive steps to prevent the spread of infection when serving food. Accident and medication systems are understood and records are accurate and up-to-date. Not all children have authorisation for staff to seek emergency medical advice or treatment if an accident occurs.

Throughout the nursery, children's individual dietary requirements are met and staff have an understanding of any food allergies and special diets. Children are appropriately nourished as the cook prepares meals and snacks containing fresh vegetables and fruit on a daily basis. Children are adequately hydrated as they are offered regular drinks as well as being able to help themselves to drinking water at all times.

Children's physical development progresses appropriately as they have regular opportunities to develop skills such as running and throwing, inside the nursery and outdoors. They develop their large muscles during climbing and balancing activities and have fun with the physical education instructor on a regular basis. Their fine motor skills are developed as they use scissors, pencils, paintbrushes and glue spreaders during craft activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment and the nursery is decorated with children's own work and photographs of them at play. Staff prepare rooms by laying toys out before children arrive. Children select activities from a wide range of good quality, developmentally appropriate resources, which meet safety standards. These are organised effectively at an accessible height to encourage independent access.

Risks to children are minimised because the staff are attentive and use daily assessments to reduce possible hazards. This means that children are able to move around safely, freely and independently. Access to the provision is managed well by staff and visitors are vetted before gaining access via the closed circuit television system. Children are learning about the importance of keeping themselves safe as staff talk to them about not running inside in case they fall and not putting small toys in their mouths or they might choke. Regular fire drills are carried out, which enable children to become familiar with the procedures for emergency evacuation.

The children's welfare is further safeguarded by staff having appropriate knowledge and understanding of their personal responsibility with regards to child protection. They are aware of the possible indicators of abuse and neglect and the procedures for recording and reporting in the event of any concerns they may have.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children's care needs are well met within flexible routines that include regular activities and time for quiet and active play. Activities are planned in advance, with staff making use of the "Birth to three matters" framework, to help them focus on children's development. Some staff are not clear about the aims of the activities meaning that learning is not always maximised. Children's verbal communication skills are encouraged by staff repeating words babies say and with older children, through discussion regarding experiences at home and within the nursery. Children play well together generally and are becoming confident to express themselves as they talk to staff. In the preschool area there is a good range of toys and equipment to promote imaginative play with resources, such as the bear cave; the butterfly garden; where children watch caterpillars change into butterflies and opportunities to re enact their favourite story of 'The Gruffalo'.

Children aged under three years enjoy learning to explore and investigate using their senses. They play in the outdoor area with hoops and balls and climb on the play tunnel. Appropriate encouragement and praise is offered by staff, for example, when children are playing a matching game and manage to find the right pictures. Staff tell them how well they are doing, meaning that children feel valued and appreciated.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and ensure that children progress steadily in their development. Staff support the children in their learning and have an appropriate expectation of them, knowing what their learning needs are. Staff use suitable means to sustain children's attention, they sit with children, ask questions and help to expand their play in most areas. They recognise opportunities for extending children's learning and ask questions to provide challenge, enabling children to think and predict for themselves during activities and general conversation.

Staff observe and monitor children's play so that they are able to identify gaps in their learning. Children's individual key workers are aware of the areas of development, and this information is used to inform future planning. Planning shows the intended learning outcomes and how activities will be extended or supported for differing abilities. A weekly evaluation is also made, although plans do not always demonstrate that all six areas are consistently covered on a regular basis.

Children are keen to learn and most children are focused and able to concentrate for a sustained period of time. Children enjoy listening to stories and respond with interest, for example, to "The bear hunt". They anticipate the sound of the children walking through the woods, in the grass and running home. Children are able to link sounds with letters and clearly enjoy talking about 'Fred the Ted' and his adventures when he goes home with them. Materials for mark making are provided in a designated area and offer an assortment of resources. Children learn to link sounds with letters as they guess whose name begins with 'A' and sounds like 'a'.

Most children are able to count up to ten, the more able children are appropriately challenged and their mathematical knowledge is suitably extended. There are good opportunities for children to use number language; and to use counting on a regular basis through everyday activities. They count the children into the bathroom, the cups at the table and the number of chairs. Children do not yet; have many opportunities for calculation and problem solving during

the sessions. They have an understanding of time and place, often talking about what they did at home the previous evening. Children develop an understanding of their environment through discussion about topics, such as the role of the lollipop man.

The children make regular use of construction sets and other materials to make models. They make 3D models of the three little pig's homes and have regular opportunities to junk model. They enjoy playing educational games on the computer and find out about others cultures when it is Chinese New Year and Shavot. Using indoor and outdoor play, the children negotiate obstacle and each other, learn to balance and enjoy a regular PE session with an instructor. They learn about eating healthily and how this impacts on their body.

Children enjoy exploring with mixing paint, making dough and hand painting. They are fully involved in changing their role play area regularly to link in with the topic. Currently it is a bear cave. Although musical instruments are provided, music does not feature often enough in planning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated and respected as individuals. They develop confidence as staff help them to understand about their own needs, such as when they would like a drink. All children have the opportunity to take part in the same activities and they show pride in their achievements, often showing staff what they have done. Staff work alongside parents and other professionals to ensure they meet all children's needs, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. The children have opportunities to find out about themselves and each other, and to gain knowledge of the wider world through well chosen resources, such as dolls, small world figures, jigsaws and books. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The setting's behaviour management policy is implemented by staff, helping children to develop their understanding of what is right and wrong and most children respond well to the boundaries set. They take turns, share and help staff to tidy up. However, at mealtimes the older children sometimes become bored waiting and behaviour can deteriorate.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff ensure parents are informed of what their child will be learning through the nursery prospectus, regular newsletters and an evening discussion about the Foundation Stage. Communication with parents is good. There is daily written communication which is used by parents and staff to record important matters as well as their child's day at nursery. At day book also records important issues so that all staff, especially those working part-time, are fully aware of each child's individual needs. Parents have the opportunity to discuss and contribute to their child's progress more formally at parents' evenings twice a year. Parents speak very positively about the setting and particularly comment upon the warm and reassuring welcome they receive.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The qualified staff team provide an appropriate range of activities for the children and ensure they are well cared for. Training is prioritised and enables staff to reflect on their practice and keep up-to-date with current trends. This benefits the children in their care. However, the member of staff who leads the out of school club, does not as yet have the required qualification. Staffing levels in the nursery are organised to ensure that children receive sufficient attention

and support, with the exception of the out of school club. The arrangements to ensure and monitor adult to child ratios are not fully robust. All regulatory policies and procedures are in place to ensure that staff have sufficient information to support children's placements.

Leadership and management is good. Roles are clear and staff work well together to plan and teach. There is a commitment to improvement which is reflected in staff's willingness to undertake further training. The manager is a good role model and is able to delegate successfully. An effective appraisal system formally identifies staff's strengths and weaknesses and addresses their further training needs. There is good communication between the team in the form of message books, staff notice boards and regular team meetings. However, the systems in place to monitor and evaluate the curriculum planning to ensure that all six areas are covered are not yet effective. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to update some of their policies; review the risk assessment and promote very young children's independence when feeding. The policies have now been updated which underpin the day-to-day running of the nursery. There is a staff member responsible for health and safety that looks at the risk assessments regularly and staff who work in the baby room promote independence in all aspects of babies care. These recommendations have been met with a positive effect on children's safety, welfare and learning.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider was asked to improve staff's knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum and evaluate the plans on a weekly basis. Staff have a good knowledge of the foundation stage and the early learning goals. All planning is evaluated on a weekly basis and these are used to inform future planning.

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.

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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):

- review arrangements at mealtimes so that children are effectively supervised, children's social skills are promoted and boredom does not lead to boisterous behaviour
- ensure hygiene procedures are consistently followed particularly when serving food to children
- provide an action plan detailing how and when the out of school club leader will gain the relevant qualification and ensure that correct ratios are adhered to.
- ensure that permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is sought for each child.

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 planning further to show how all areas of learning are covered on a regular basis and ensure that the systems to monitor and evaluate the education provision, identify this.
- ensure that all staff are clear about the learning outcomes for the activities provided so that learning is effectively developed (also applies to Care).

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