

Carousel Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 310405
Inspection date 30 April 2007
Inspector Sheila May Price

Setting Address Oxford Road, Waterloo,, Liverpool, Merseyside, L22 8QE

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Registered person Shirley Hogg and Amanda Ryan

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Carousel Day Nursery was registered in 1994 and is run by a private partnership. It operates from a converted school building located in the Waterloo district of Liverpool, and serves families in the local and surrounding areas. There are a number of rooms catering for different ages and the nursery has a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The provision is open from 07.00 to 18.00 Monday to Friday, all year round except for Christmas week.

A maximum of 62 children aged under five may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 37 children on roll of whom 15 receive funding for nursery education. The provision currently supports children with disabilities. The nursery employs nine members of staff to work with the children. Of these all hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority early years team.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children follow healthy routines. They use the outdoor play area on a daily basis to get some fresh air whatever the weather and babies are taken out for walks in their prams when it is fine. Small babies eat and sleep according to their own timetable initially so that they settle well and gradually adjust to the nursery routine over time. Children learn how to wash and dry their hands. This procedure is usually carried out before they eat and children are prompted to do so after they go to the toilet.

Staff maintain a suitably healthy environment by cleaning table tops and floors throughout the day as needed and having rotas for washing toys and furnishings. The sickness policy is shared with parents so that they contribute to preventing the spread of infection. Effective arrangements are made for dealing with accidents and giving medication. Children are protected from the sun when they go out by wearing hats. Opportunities to talk to children about how to take care of themselves and how their bodies work are overlooked by some of the staff during every day routines.

Children eat food that has been safely prepared and provides a balanced and nutritious diet. Children are encouraged to try different tastes and consistencies through a varied menu, to broaden their experiences and to encourage healthy choices. Children have drinks at regular intervals with their meals and snacks. Water is taken outside in case they get thirsty after exercise.

There is a good range of equipment throughout the nursery which children use well to develop their fine motor skills and co-ordination. Children learn to move imaginatively in response to music, control their bodies during stop start games, and climb up, over, and through obstacles. Babies enjoy using equipment indoors to reach out for, crawl towards, and push along as they gain increasing mobility. Staff give good support for children with specific physical needs in strengthening muscles for walking

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The buildings and grounds are satisfactorily maintained and security procedures at arrival and departure times work well. Children are provided with good space indoors and out for a range of activities. Despite some ageing of the premises and furniture, a welcoming environment is created through colourful displays and accessible layout of equipment.

Children are usually well protected by safety procedures. Equipment is safely maintained and organised and children learn to tidy up to prevent tripping hazards. However, although there are check lists to remind staff what to do before children arrive, these are not always used effectively, and staff fail to unlock a fire door. Risk assessment documents are generally satisfactory, but do not cover all aspects of safety in the provision.

Children learn to share their feelings and are developing the confidence to make their own choices within acceptable boundaries, which contributes to their safety and protection. They learn to move around safely indoors and out to prevent accidents. Although staff supervise children well for their safety, not all staff have a full understanding of good practice in the physical handling of children for their own and children's protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well settled at the nursery because staff establish secure relationships with them. The timetable offers a good percentage of time for continuous uninterrupted child led play, which helps young children develop confidence in making choices and exploring the world around them. Babies have a cosy carpeted room to play in, which facilitates the adjustment from home to nursery environment.

Staff use knowledge of their key children gained from observations and information given by parents to plan activities which are generally suited to children's needs, abilities and interests. The drive to follow a theme or to create displays sometimes interferes with good judgement about whether the subject matter is relevant enough to the experience of babies and toddlers to be really meaningful to them.

Young children creatively use some good resources for exploring sound, shape, colour, and texture, such as sand, water, paint, construction materials and musical toys. Treasure baskets for babies to explore natural or domestic objects and materials are not well enough organised to be used effectively for children's enjoyment. Children are generally enthusiastic and inquisitive. They play together co-operatively and imaginatively, are interested in what goes on around them, and are proud of their achievements.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make steady progress towards early learning goals. Staff have a sufficient knowledge of the Foundation Stage to set up an environment that supports children's learning in all areas of development. Activities are varied and interesting so children engage in them well. Staff make some good observations but are not yet confident in evaluating what these mean in terms of children's learning, and thus records of progress are not always completed well and used effectively for planning next steps.

Children are happy and at ease with the staff, who act in a positive and friendly manner towards them, which fosters their self-esteem. The quality of methods used to challenge children to think and achieve as much as they can, is however mixed. Although some staff handle book sharing activities well to stimulate children's interest in stories and to recall past events, not all staff are equally confident in stimulating and developing children's problem solving capabilities during play and every day routines. This means that some children are not fully stretched, particularly in areas of mathematical development. Children learn to recognise and write their names during meaningful activities

Children enjoy the opportunity to share their news. They join in songs with raised and quiet voices and clap out rhythms with enthusiasm. When using paint children carefully choose the colours to mix and concentrate well as they watch the different effects they can make as they spread some glitter. As children sing number rhymes they hold up their fingers to represent how many. Children explore the properties of dry sand and find out that it pours well but cannot be moulded like wet sand. When going outdoors daily children experience the changes in the weather and the seasons and appreciate the passing of time.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development is fostered. Children learn social skills well. They share and take turns as they play together in small manageable groups, beginning to use negotiation to resolve differences. They are encouraged to be helpful and considerate towards others and participate well in tidying up. Some take great pride in sweeping up all the sand to their satisfaction. Staff reward children for being helpful by giving them a star to wear.

Children learn to appreciate a sense of belonging and community through the use of 'Billy Bear' who they take turns in having at home for the weekend. When the bear is returned, his story of the weekend is shared with the other children who delight in listening to his experiences and looking at the photographs that have been put in his book. Sometimes members of the community, such as fire officers visit the nursery to talk about how their jobs contribute to children's safety.

Staff meet the individual welfare needs of children through their key worker system. There is effective communication with parents and other agencies to support children with disabilities who make good progress as a result. Children have good access to a range of resources so that they can make their own independent choices. Staff do not plan the use of books and pictures well enough to introduce children to diversity in the wider community or select material which positively challenges stereotypes.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. There is information about how the nursery operates displayed on the wall and given to parents in an information pack so that arrangements for children's welfare are understood. Parents have access to policy documents and may visit at any time without a prior appointment. Staff obtain good information from parents of new children to help with the settling in process. Information shared with parents about the stepping stones to early learning goals, and how their children are making progress in relation to these, is not shared sufficiently well to encourage full and informed participation by parents. Some parents make a good contribution to children's learning through visiting to talk about their jobs or helping on outings.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The nursery has had few changes in staffing over the years and thus provides good continuity for the children and families. The owners are fully informed about the new vetting processes and have suitable systems for ensuring students are inducted and supervised for children's protection. Regulatory records are appropriately maintained for children's safety.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff who take on new management roles have a keen desire to make improvements and work well with the owners who provide administrative and moral support. There is a commitment to employing a full complement of qualified staff which acts as a good base line for further development. An agreed action plan drafted in consultation with local authority advisors has resulted in policies for children's safety being updated. However, training for staff to improve and update their knowledge in health and safety and child protection issues is still in process.

Managers have yet to introduce their own systems for self evaluation or monitoring the quality of the educational programme, but readily take up advice and training opportunities. This has

led to a reappraisal of teaching methods and organisation of the learning environment from which children are now beginning to reap the benefits. Teams in each room work together well. There are still areas to develop in overall cohesion of the planning and assessment systems as children progress through the nursery.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were six recommendations arising from the last care inspection and four from the last nursery education inspection. Issues relating to care included making improvements in record keeping and updating policy documents, staff training and development, and consistency in staff practices in relation to safety. Issues relating to nursery education involved improving opportunities for children to make independent choices, their involvement in practical and meaningful activities, and the identification of learning aims in planning.

Improvements for children's care and safety have been made as follows. Policies and record keeping systems relating to sick children, giving medication, recording accidents, and missing child have all been updated and amended for greater clarity in the operational plan. Measures to improve the consistency with which staff carry out health and safety policies have been instigated but are not yet fully monitored. Staff appraisal systems are not yet fully established but training plans do link to identified areas for improvement.

Considerable improvements have been made in relation to children's nursery education. Staff have attended training and obtained advice on reorganising their learning environment to provide children with opportunities for continuous uninterrupted learning and for making independent choices. Children are now able to select tools more confidently, be more creative in their art work, and choose more varied resources to explore and investigate. Staff are providing children with more practical opportunities for children to write for a purpose so that learning is more meaningful. Learning aims are still not clearly identified in plans therefore this is an area for continued improvement.

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 complaint 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):

- continue to develop the consistency with which daily checks are carried out for children's safety and ensure that all staff understand risk assessment processes and child protection procedures
- improve the range of resources that reflect positive images of diversity and plan their use.

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 the training and monitoring systems to help staff evaluate their observations in terms of children's learning so they can decide on next steps to plan for and follow these through consistently.

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