

The Village Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	314746
Inspection date	02 May 2007
Inspector	Josie Lever
Setting Address	31a New Village Road, Cottingham, North Humberside, HU16 4LX
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Registered person	For Under Fives 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

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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?

The Village Day Nursery opened in 1991 and is one of a group of nurseries owned by a private company known as For Under Fives Ltd, whose Head Office is based in Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire. The nursery is situated in a converted Victorian house in the village of Cottingham, within the East Riding of Yorkshire. Children attend from a large catchment area but primarily the local area and surrounding villages. A maximum of 50 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.00 to 18.00, all year around apart from bank holidays. Children aged between four and under eight years attend the out of school club. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 74 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll. Of these, 30 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and a small number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery has 12 staff working on a full- and part-time basis, all of whom hold a recognised early years qualification. Several are working towards higher National Vocational Qualification

(NVQ) levels 3 and 4. The setting receives support from the East Riding Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

There are good opportunities for children to learn about being healthy. For example, they are provided with a healthy range of fresh meals prepared daily. A four week menu is planned in advance, which is changed frequently, taking into account a range of seasonal produce. Children sit in small groups at lunchtime and enjoy a social meal together. For example, chicken, noodles and stir fry vegetables. An alternative menu is prepared for the younger babies, such as fish pie and fresh vegetables, and children's individual dietary needs are catered for well. At routine times throughout the day children enjoy snack time. They can choose from a selection of toast, toasted bagels or fresh fruit. Older children pour their own milk into their cups or help themselves to fresh drinking water from the chilled water dispenser. When they are thirsty at other times of the day they independently help themselves to the water using their own labelled drink bottle stored on the nearby trolley. Disposable tissues are provided in all rooms, with older children helping themselves to these, for example, to blow their nose. Additionally, the children see books and posters with images of healthy ingredients and talk about good foods with the staff.

The children are developing a good understanding of the importance of personal hygiene. Hand washing routines are very familiar to them and they understand the need to follow these. For example, they wash their hands after they visit the toilet and before eating food. Younger children are well supported by staff in developing an appropriate understanding about the reasons why they must wash their hands because adults speak to them about these. Suitable resources are provided in the bathroom areas to encourage children's independence. Staff encourage children to use the water and soap in the hand basins or use hand wipes on most occasions. The staff are good role models for the children; they follow effective procedures for maintaining a good level of hygiene within the nursery. Consequently, this minimises the risk of cross-infection to the children. For example, they clean tables before the children eat and mop up accidents in toilet training quickly. They wear protective clothing, such as aprons and gloves when changing nappies and serving food or applying teething gel to babies' gums. Dummies are stored separately in covered containers and staff follow the latest health advice in preparing formula milk feeds. Carpets remain clean and hygienic, particularly so for younger children and babies who play at floor level, because staff and visitors wear shoe covers when in these rooms.

The children have good opportunities for physical exercise and activities, such as music and movement, and the weekly sports day sessions encourage them to be physically active. They are able to rest and sleep in accordance with their parents' wishes and own sleep patterns. Their health and well-being is further promoted through a clear sickness policy and the effective management of children's illnesses. For example, children who are infectious are required to remain at home. Staff are confident to deal with any emergency because all have attended first aid training and there are sufficient staff on the premises who hold a first aid certificate.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and friendly environment where some of their artwork is displayed appropriately. The building is adequately maintained and, with the exception of floor coverings, the majority of play areas display increased signs of wear and tear, for example, flaking paintwork and chipped painted walls. Most aspects of children's safety have been considered. There is a detailed risk assessment in place and all areas are checked by adults for safety before use. Sleeping children are protected because staff have a procedure for checking them frequently. However, the paving slab in front of the sliding patio door is loose and therefore poses a current risk to children's safety as they come in and out of the nursery to the garden. Additionally, not all staff demonstrate a good enough understanding about securing younger children safely in low chairs, for example, when eating meals and snacks, and therefore this compromises their safety.

Children start to gain some understanding of maintaining their own safety, for example, as they participate in fire evacuation drills and use scissors properly. They learn about safety from visits by the fire service and local police. Children are safeguarded because adults demonstrate a suitable understanding of their responsibilities with regard to protecting children and the procedures to follow should they have any concerns. Some staff have attended training and share their knowledge with other team members through discussions at staff meetings. Children have access to a suitable range of activities and play materials which are regularly cleaned and checked for safety. They have some opportunities to select resources independently in all rooms, for example, role play, books and construction. Documents, such as accidents and medication records contain all the relevant information to maintain the children's safety. These records are shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled and familiar with the groups in which they are cared for. They form warm relationships with the staff and benefit from the social interactions with other children, for example, as they join together in the garden area. There are established routines that enable children to settle easily. Children are secure within the setting and happily leave their parents and carers with confidence. Staff are caring in their approach. Babies and toddlers are situated on the first floor within three rooms. Children over two years are situated on the ground floor and have the use of two rooms. Children engage in play as staff prepare accessible activities to interest them. For example, some children sit at a table to draw using a variety of large chunky coloured crayons, more able children play in the sand tray using a range of sand moulds. Children begin to show interest in pictures as they sit with staff and look at the books. Suitable toys and equipment are in place to support the varying stages of children's development. For example, younger children and babies have a small selection of natural materials, such as 'feely boxes' containing a variety of textured materials and natural objects. A range of hanging mobiles stimulate the younger children and crawling babies are encouraged to stand on their own feet with support from adults. They respond with excitement to the praise they receive.

Staff have attended training on the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which supports children in their early years, and they use their observations of children and their evaluations to plan the next steps in the children's learning. Children respond to familiar songs at singing time before snacks or lunch, for example, 'Wind the Bobbin Up' and 'Twinkle Twinkle'. Children are generally well cared for and have their individual needs met within the daily routines. Staff

demonstrate a clear understanding of their roles and ensure that all relevant information on the children is recorded and shared with parents, such as nappy changes, sleeps and meals. Mobile children show interest as they move around the room and independently select toys. They show a sense of self as they look at their reflection in a low-level mirror. Most children are able to feed themselves independently and use a range of small cutlery well. However, sometimes staff do not always enable younger children to develop their social skills to feed themselves because they do it for them and do not encourage them to try and use a spoon.

Older children attending the out of school club are able to make choices about their play and there is a suitable range of equipment both indoors and outdoors to meet their needs. They use the back pre-school room after school as younger children are taken into the front. Here, they are able to enjoy free play activities and an interesting programme of fun activities is planned within the holiday periods. For example, visits to the local park and teaming up with other local children to participate in team games and sporting activities. Children have lots of opportunities to develop their creativity as they design Easter bonnet hats or make cards. They have recently been talking about the changes and stages a caterpillar goes through in order to become a butterfly and a display of this themed work is presented in their play area. Children speak excitedly about the cress seeds they are growing and about the plant diaries they have made to record the progress of their plants as they grow. However, on occasions, adults sometimes do too much for the older children, which limits their independence, for example, mixing up the paints for them to paint their under the sea scene and writing their names on pieces of work.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and children make steady progress towards the early learning goals. Staff plan to cover an area of learning each month with activities that link to current themes or events, such as 'Sea Life' and 'Spring'. Children develop some independent skills as they choose some equipment around the play areas, such as the sand and water areas. They try to put on their own coats and shoes for outdoor play and change back into their slippers, some with increasing success. They help to set out the cups and pour the drinks at lunchtime. They play well together and share resources during the activities. Children take part in regular, organised, creative activities. However, the storage of creative materials does limit children's independent choice and, therefore, it is the adults rather than the children who make decisions about which creative mediums are used. Children enjoy good opportunities to explore colour and texture, for example, through painting, collage and three-dimensional threading activities. Children recognise colours in their environment, for example, as they talk about red, blue, green and yellow connecting bricks. They talk about the grey and white clouds in the sky as they discuss the weather at snack time. Children join in enthusiastically to action rhymes, such as 'What shall we do, Punchinello little fellow?', and experiment with a range of sounds as they play musical instruments in the sound corner.

Children join confidently together in small groups and staff are effective in promoting their confidence and self-esteem. For example, four-year-olds are encouraged to talk about pending holidays with family. Many children speak clearly and are starting to recognise their names; for example, they select their name tag on arrival and place it over a peg. They are beginning to understand some phonic sounds and recognise the beginning of some words, such as 'm' for May. Many children listen attentively as staff read them a story, for example, 'I don't want to go to hospital', and some show interest in books during free play. Children show an interest in writing as they make marks and some recognisable letters when writing in the mark-making area. They have opportunities to recreate patterns and write their names in their handwriting

books. Children are interested in counting and this is encouraged well by staff, who make sure children have good opportunities to count and calculate in everyday situations. For example, they count the number of children and adults present at the lunch table and number of plates. They confidently count as a group to 15 and some older children confidently count to 20 or more. Children recognise simple shapes, for example, circles and triangles, as they mould their bodies into these shapes when doing music and movement.

Children enjoy suitable opportunities to explore and experiment as they learn about living things, for example, the life cycle of the frog or talk about creatures under the sea. Children start to gain some understanding about the passage of time as they name the days of the week and the talk about the seasons. Some are aware of what day it was yesterday and what day it will be tomorrow. Children speak confidently about their holidays and a displayed map of the world with postcards attached acts as a good talking prompt. Children show appropriate skill when using a computer mouse and have some opportunities to investigate objects using magnets and magnifying glasses. Children have suitable opportunities to learn about their local community and the wider world. There are some positive images of culture and disability displayed throughout the premises, which helps to raise children's awareness of diversity. They learn about traditions and culture relating to themselves and others; for example, they celebrate Christian festivals, such as Christmas and Easter, and Chinese New Year. Children show interest in the natural world. They plant a range of seeds and plants which they tend and eat, for example, cress seeds. They are also able to talk about their local community and recent experiences, for example, their birthday party and travelling by aeroplane to go on holiday.

Children enjoy a well-planned programme of daily physical activity. They use a range of smaller equipment well, for example, sand and water tools, pencils, paintbrushes and scissors. These help to promote children's hand-eye co-ordination. They develop physical skills and coordination during indoor and outdoor play. They develop an awareness of space and body control as they move around during music and movement to action songs; for example, they use their imagination to move around like seahorses. They play indoors with a parachute, shaking it gently at first then more vigorously, imitating the changing patterns of the sea. They laugh with great pleasure as the sea creatures they made the day before bob up and down on top of the parachute. Children have weekly opportunities to participate in 'Sports Day'. They use a variety of equipment with increasing control, such as a balancing beam, bats, balls, bean bags and other sporting equipment. When outdoors they line up excitedly to complete the obstacle course, using their bodies well to climb over and under the climbing frames and through the tunnels. They weave in and out of cones and hop and jump using one and two legs onto circle mats. Many older children develop good skill in this area. A range of bicycles and wheeled toys are provided which develop pedalling skills well.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well; most staff have a good rapport with the children and their parents and are able to communicate easily and readily so that any issues or concerns can be addressed. This includes working with children who speak English as an additional language. Staff know the children well and have built up close and trusting relationships with them. Children feel a strong sense of belonging in the provision; for example, their birthdays are acknowledged and displayed. They feel settled and secure in the homely environment as they change into their slippers on arrival.

Children are made to feel welcome and staff work well with others involved in the children's care and education. They are currently receiving support from the area Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator and staff are working together to support the needs of children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Staff attend appropriate training and meetings on related matters to ensure that they have current information to enable them to support children's specific needs. Parents' views are actively sought through informal discussion and a suggestion scheme. There is a complaints procedure known to parents that complies with requirements. Parents receive a detailed handbook about the nursery's policies and procedures, which is of good quality and keeps them fully informed. A parents' noticeboard is displayed with useful information on both floors and newsletters are sent home, keeping them informed about present and future events.

Children are well behaved and show respect towards their peers and the adults. They know and understand routines and respond well to praise and encouragement, for example, seeing who can tidy up for drinks time. Staff promote positive attitudes in children as they encourage them to share and to be considerate towards each other, for example, when completing the obstacle course. Children are aware of the types of behaviour that are not acceptable and most staff use suitable behaviour management strategies and are clear and consistent in their approach. There is a range of resources that promote diversity in a positive way, for example, dolls, books, posters and role play equipment, and children learn about other cultures through a well-planned curriculum of festivals and celebrations. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from their parents' welcome into the nursery and close liaison with their key workers. They get to know the children well and keep parents informed with regular daily chats and detailed daily diaries about their child's daily routine. Additionally, more formal meetings are arranged where they can discuss their children's progress and records of achievements, for example, at parents' evenings. Parents of children receiving nursery education funding receive well-organised detailed information about the nursery, including information about Foundation Stage guidance and the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Parents and children benefit because there are good systems in place to encourage involvement in their child's learning. For example, parents are encouraged to take 'Jolly Holly' the teddy bear on holiday and write a postcard with their child about its time with them. They are also encouraged to bring in items to support the theme, for example, photographs. At inspection, most parents provide positive feedback on the provision and are happy with their children's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit because they are cared for by a well-qualified and established staff group who have made a commitment to ongoing training; for example, some staff are working towards NVQ levels 3 and 4 qualifications. They work well as a team and most are fully aware of their roles and support children well across both services, the nursery and the out of school club. Space is suitably organised to meet the needs of most children; however, as already stated, this does not enable those children over two years to make spontaneous decisions about their play. There are effective recruitment procedures in place to appoint new staff; however, not all records are available at inspection to support staff's suitability. The clear organisation of staff ensures that ratios are maintained throughout the setting. The majority of records and documentation are maintained in suitable order, which contribute to the health, safety and welfare of children

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The manager is well experienced and qualified and ensures all staff are involved in monthly planning meetings by appointing additional staff cover to enable staff to undertake their planning roles. Children have a balance of free play and more structured activities during the day. However, the organisation of the children's routines downstairs does limit their spontaneous opportunities to access the full range of activities on offer at a time of their choosing. This is because each age group rotates through both rooms and has an allocated period of time in each room both morning and afternoon. Children respond to the support and attention from most staff well, which usually promotes their interest. However, some staff are less able to interact with children at an appropriate level to their understanding and maturity and therefore some children are not always fully supported. Staff have a suitable understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan an appropriate programme of activities. Children's key workers have a reasonable understanding of their individual stage of development and make regular observations to assess their progress. However, they are less confident in using the information gained in these assessments to plan for the next steps in children's learning. Plans fail to identify how further challenges for older and more able children will be provided.

The setting takes positive steps to effectively evaluate the nursery education provision, for example, by staff providing feedback on how they can make improvements in response to recommendations made at the last inspection. Additionally, staff attend refresher training and, with the support of the local authority, are willing to change ways of working to improve the outcome for children. Most of the issues raised at the last inspection have been suitably addressed. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was required to improve the access and presentation of resources to provide sufficient opportunities for older children to self-select chosen activities and equipment. The group has made satisfactory progress in these areas. Older children benefit because they can now reach some resources and equipment independently. For example, those surrounding the water and sand play areas and most of those in the front playroom. However, the creative resources are not so effectively organised and therefore children still remain unable to self-select these, which limits their spontaneous choice. Additionally, the setting was asked to develop the child protection policy and consider a system to inform parents about the setting's range of policies and procedures. Children's welfare is now given greater consideration because the safeguarding children policy includes a procedure to notify Ofsted as the regulator of any concerns. Parents now receive a detailed handbook of the setting's related policies and procedures and, as a result of this, children's health, welfare and safety are suitably promoted.

At the last nursery education inspection the group were asked to make greater use of the resources and spontaneous events to develop children's independence skills, freedom of choice and self-expression. In particular they were required to make greater use of practical situations to develop children's understanding of numbers, problem solving and calculation. The setting has made reasonable progress in this area and children do develop some independence skills in choosing their resources; however, this has not been addressed fully. This is more so to do with the organisation of the daily routines split within two rooms. This will be a recommendation carried forward again this inspection. The group have, however, addressed the latter point regarding mathematical development very well. Children develop a good understanding about numbers and problem solving, for example, as they count the number of children and plates needed at lunchtime. Additionally, the group was asked to improve opportunities for children

to experiment, investigate and observe change and increase and develop physical skills for older children. Good progress has been made in both areas. A selection of tools has been purchased, such as magnets and magnifying glasses, and children now experiment by using the equipment well, for example, to look at small or large objects and pick up a range of magnetic items. The introduction of a weekly sports day activity session increases children's gross motor skills and physical development as they complete an obstacle course over and under a range of different-sized climbing and balancing apparatus.

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.

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 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 the garden pavement slab is made safe
- further improve the safety of younger children sitting on low chairs
- increase children's spontaneous opportunities to access the full range of resources and activities on offer (also includes nursery education)
- ensure records are available for inspection at all times
- provide more opportunities for younger children to feed themselves independently.

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):

- further develop the assessment process to identify the next steps in children's learning
- provide more opportunities for children to explore creatively through selecting their own resources
- further develop the planning process to identify how older/more able children will be challenged.

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