

The Avenue Private Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	323015
Inspection date	28 June 2007
Inspector	Carla Owen
Setting Address	The Avenue Private Day Nursery, The Avenue, Leigh, WN7 1ET
Telephone number	01942 261 339
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Registered person	Lesley & Bernard Meadows
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?

The Avenue Private Day Nursery opened in 1991. It operates from a converted Victorian Sunday School building within a residential area of Leigh town centre. The nursery offers full day care provision for up to 71 children aged from six weeks to five years and is organised to provide care in individual rooms for babies, little toddlers, big toddlers, pre-school and nursery group.

The nursery operates over 51 weeks of the year, between the hours of 07.30 and 18.00 Monday to Friday. Part time places are also provided. At present there are 92 children attending, of whom there are 42 in receipt of funding for nursery education. There are currently no children attending the nursery who have learning difficulties or disabilities. The nursery supports children who speak English as an additional language. A manager is employed to oversee nursery operations, and in addition to this 16 care staff are employed all of which hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three staff are currently working towards a level 3 qualification, two are working towards a level 2 qualification and one staff member is working towards a Level 4 qualification. The owners of the nursery are both experienced teachers. The nursery also receives support from a community advisory teacher from Surestart.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning good hygiene routines as they are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times of the day, such as before eating and after toileting. Staff follow satisfactory procedures to promote children's good health, for example, cleaning tables with anti-bacterial sprays and ensuring the toilets are adequately stocked for children to use. An effective sick child policy is in place which excludes any Children with infectious illnesses from the setting and staff contact parents when children become ill. Children are treated appropriately in the event of an accident or emergency as all staff are qualified in first aid and a fully stocked first aid box is readily available. Clear procedures are in place for the administration of medication, however, these are not correctly maintained. Babies and young children are secure with consistent routines, for example, sleep and feeding routines are followed in line with home routines. These are recorded in a daily diary to keep parents informed about their children. This promotes children's health and sense of security.

Children's physical development is promoted throughout the nursery. Babies are encouraged to pull themselves up with support from staff and benefit from fresh air as they are taken out regularly. Older children benefit from regular PE sessions and daily outdoor play during the week, where they learn about the affect of exercise on their bodies and use a range of equipment to help them gain control of their bodies. Children use tools competently when manipulating play dough and develop their coordination through dance, climbing and balancing activities. Swimming lessons are also provided for the children at an additional charge.

Information regarding children's dietary requirements are obtained upon entry to the nursery and taken into account when planning menus. This ensures that children's dietary needs are successfully met at all times. Meals are freshly cooked on the premises each day and include fresh fruit and vegetables. The menu is well balanced and nutritious to promote children's growth and development. Children's independence skills are promoted as they are provided with appropriate cutlery when eating their meals. Fresh drinking water is readily available to the children throughout the nursery, thus helping them to keep themselves hydrated and refreshed throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a welcoming and stimulating environment, where their independent artwork is clearly displayed giving them a good sense of belonging within the nursery. Playrooms benefit from lots of natural light and are maintained at an appropriate temperature, further ensuring children's comfort. Quiet areas are easily accessible to all children, enabling them to rest, play quietly or simply to have some time to themselves. Children have access to sufficient resources within the nursery, however, these are limited within some areas and are not always accessible. Although toys are checked frequently by staff, the quality of some resources are not of a high standard.

Children are, generally well protected from hazards due to risk assessments indoors carried out by staff and written policies concerning safety. Fire evacuation procedures are clearly displayed and drills are carried out on a regular basis, ensuring children are aware of how to follow defined procedures in the event of a fire or emergency evacuation. A doorbell system is in place at the

entrance area to manage access to the building. Safety precautions, such as fire detection equipment and a visitors' book further contributes to the protection of children.

Children's welfare is fully safeguarded as staff have a good awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and are clear on the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and secure. They enjoy close and warm relationships with adults who know them well. Babies receive lots of hugs and cuddles from staff, which helps them form a strong bond with their carers. Children hold out their hands to familiar adults to be picked up and snuggle in close. Younger children enjoy plenty of opportunities to freely explore the resources available to them. They engage in creative and messy activities with adult support and have great fun as they explore the textures of gloop, foam and pasta. Staff working with babies are responsive. They encourage communication skills as they respond to their verbal and non-verbal communications, imitate babies' babbling and spend time looking at books together. Children learn to make connections when they press buttons or turn switches and are enthralled by the outcome of cause and effect toys. Very young children make connections and begin to develop a sense of self, as they use low level mirrors to look at their reflections. Musical instruments are introduced to young children to increase their motivation to create sounds and extend their fine motor skills development.

Staff have a good awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework which they use to plan a variety of activities for the children. They demonstrate a secure knowledge of their key children. Regular observations are made of the children and used to inform future planning which results in them making good progress in their learning. Staff are deployed effectively to provide good care and support to the children. Children have their individual needs met, for example, staff recognise when young children are tired or hungry and make them comfortable, which helps children feel safe and secure.

Nursery education

The quality of the teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making steady progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Staff have a growing awareness of the Foundation Stage and how children learn, which is reflected in the varied range of play opportunities planned and provided for the children. Planning is linked to topics with identified learning outcomes, but these do not include the stepping stones and planning of focused activities do not always show how activities are adapted to meet the individual needs of more or less able children. Regular observations and assessments are made of the children and the next steps in their learning are identified, however, these are not consistently used to inform future planning. There is currently no clear system for monitoring children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals, which results in gaps in children's learning not being identified. A range of teaching methods are used to meet the needs of the children. Children benefit from generally well organised areas of continuous provision, which enables them to choose from a suitable range of activities, such as water play, construction, gluing and sticking and imaginative play.

Children are making steady progress in relation to their handwriting skills. Many children are able to form recognisable letters and some are able to write their name. They learn that print carries meaning as objects around the room are labelled, some of which the children have created themselves and time is set aside each day for children to listen to a story. Children

enjoy accessing books independently and retelling a story. For example, children select a book in the reading corner and tell the story to the inspector, showing the pictures as they read and explaining what they see. Children are making good progress in mathematics. They recognise numbers one to ten as they select the correct amount of apples to put on the tree, and are able to count to 10 and beyond as they count the number of children present. Children sing number rhymes, such as 'ten sizzling sausages', which helps them grasp concepts, such as calculating. Activities, such as baking fairy cakes help children develop their understanding of measure in practical situations. The children confidently list the ingredients which they have used to make the mixture and express their eagerness to decorate their cakes once they have been cooked.

Children are gaining an appreciation of their local environment and community as they go on regular outings to the park, library and visit 'people who help us', such as the lollipop lady and local fireman. They learn about change and growth as they plant seeds and learn about the life cycle of a frog. Some opportunities are available for children to build and construct models and develop their designing and making skills. However, opportunities are very limited for children to independently explore and investigate their surroundings.

Children are able to express themselves creatively within the nursery as they paint pictures and have access to a wide range of creative resources. For example, during a focused activity children explore the texture of shaving foam. Staff support children well in the activity through effective questioning and encourage the use of vocabulary, such as 'soft' and 'smooth' to describe the texture. Paint is added to the foam and children delight at the colours which are created as they mix the paint with their hands. One child announces 'look! It's made blue!' Music is promoted as children sing familiar songs and create rhythms using musical instruments. Children are able to use their imagination as they play in the role play area and play with small world toys.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are warmly greeted on arrival making them feel welcome. Children are confident and develop a high self esteem. They are aware of the daily routine and have some opportunities to take responsibilities within this, such as helping to tidy up. Children learn about diversity and the wider world through a range of resources that promote positive images and respect for equality of opportunity. They learn about different cultures and countries as they celebrate special events from different religions. Children are generally well behaved. Staff are positive role models who show respect and courtesy to children. Children are all praised, encouraged and warmly reassured according to their needs. Younger children learn to share, take turns and play together cooperatively following adult guidance. Therefore children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents are warmly welcomed into the nursery at the beginning and end of each day. Informal chats along with the daily diary and home/nursery book helps to keep them up to date with their children's care. Information on the staff employed at the nursery is displayed which keeps parents informed on the staff caring for their children. Policies and procedures are made available, keeping parents fully informed of practices which operate within the nursery. Planning documents and information on the components of the 'Birth to three matters' framework are displayed, allowing parents to develop an awareness of the curriculum being delivered to their children. Discussions with parents indicate that they are happy with the service provided. They clearly value the 'friendly, helpful and approachable staff' and feel very well informed of the care which is provided for their children.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of nursery education is satisfactory. Education days at the beginning of the academic year help give parents an insight into the curriculum being delivered to their children, however, written information about the Foundation Stage is currently not available for parents. Newsletters provide information on upcoming events and topics, and activity sheets are sent home throughout the year to encourage parents to become involved in their children's learning. Parents are currently not invited to contribute to their children's assessments and are not provided with written reports on their children's progress throughout the year, preventing them from being fully involved in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a well qualified staff team. Suitable procedures are in place for the recruitment and vetting of new staff to the nursery. However, there are currently no formal systems in place to check staff's continued suitability to work with children. Good systems have been established to ensure ratios are adhered to at all times. An induction system is in place, which forms a firm basis for staff employment. Contingency arrangements are in place to cover for staff shortages. A very effective key worker system has been established and the grouping of children ensures that they receive positive support and interaction with familiar staff. All necessary policies and procedures are in place and work in practice. Most documentation was available at inspection and correctly maintained, however, some inconsistencies have been identified; staff attendance registers are not consistently completed to show the hours of attendance.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. There is a strong commitment to improvement and staff are able to identify their training needs through annual appraisals and regular staff meetings. The manager works closely with the local authority and other outside agencies in order to improve the quality of the provision. The manager is able to clearly identify the nursery's strengths and areas for improvement, they are taking positive steps to improve the quality of the nursery education through working closely with the staff and the local authority. The manager has built a committed staff team, who work very well together and clearly enjoy what they do.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

During the last inspection the provider agreed to conduct a risk assessment of current emergency evacuation procedures during staff lunch breaks to ensure sufficient staff are available to evacuate children, and to ensure drains within the outdoor play area are made inaccessible to children. Much progress has been made. A risk assessment has been conducted, staff lunch breaks have been staggered and an emergency evacuation carried out during a lunch break to ensure sufficient staff are on sight. Most drains are now covered within the outdoor play area although one uncovered drain was discovered during inspection.

Nursery education

At the last inspection the provider was asked to improve opportunities for children to solve mathematical problems through questioning and challenges during play and planned activities; to improve short term planning systems to make clear links with assessments of next steps in

children's learning and to improve the organisation of the role play area. Some progress has been made. Children are able to solve problems in everyday play and staff encourage problem solving during focused activities through use of questioning. Children's next steps of learning are identified, however, these are not consistently used to inform future planning. Role play areas are generally well organised and rotated to vary the experiences for children. Children often access the role play areas independently.

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 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):

- ensure toys and resources throughout the nursery are accessible to the children and of a good quality
- devise a formal system for monitoring staff's ongoing suitability to work with children
- ensure staff registers consistently show hours of attendance and ensure written permission is consistently obtained from parents when administering medication.

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 planning systems; ensure consistent links are made to the stepping stones and ensure plans are differentiated to meet the needs of the less or more able children
- provide more opportunities for children to independently explore and investigate their surroundings
- improve the partnership with parents through providing good quality information on the Foundation Stage Curriculum; involve parents in children's assessments and keep parents more up to date with their 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