

Cosy Toes Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY303108
Inspection date	06 November 2007
Inspector	Carol Ann Dixon
Setting Address	431 Mainway East, Middleton, Manchester, Lancashire, M24 1RD
Telephone number	0161 654 6517
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Registered person	Cosy Toes Nursery 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?

Cosy Toes Nursery Limited is co-owned by a mother and her daughter. It first opened in 1990 and operates from a large adapted and extended bungalow. It is located in the Middleton area of Rochdale. A maximum of 86 children may attend the provision at any one time and it is open each weekday from 07.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 60 children on roll. Of these, 21 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties.

The nursery employs 20 staff. Of these, 16 including the owner/managers hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are two members of staff who are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is very well protected because staff follow highly effective hygiene procedures to ensure that areas used by the children are scrupulously cleaned. Children understand that they should wash their hands before eating, they talk about washing away the germs. There are visual reminders in the bathroom to reinforce this. As a result, children's awareness of good hygiene is being promoted. Children are encouraged to use tissues to wipe their nose; these are readily available for children to help themselves. Children are encouraged to understand about the importance of teeth cleaning as a dental hygienist visits the setting to talk to the children, which fosters a positive approach to good dental care. The setting has achieved the Golden Grin Award for healthy eating which further supports opportunities for children to learn about dental care and healthy living.

There are clear procedures for dealing with accidents, such as a fully stocked first aid box in each room and a qualified first aider present, which ensures children receive appropriate care and attention in the event of an accident or emergency. Records of accidents and administered medication are generally used well to support children's ongoing health. However, medication records are not always clearly detailed.

Children's dietary needs are successfully met as staff gather information from parents about their children and take this information into account when planning meals. Meals are freshly cooked on the premises each day. The menu is well balanced and nutritious to aid children's growth and development. Children are offered fruit and vegetables each day at snack time. They have opportunities to become independent as they make choices about what they would like to eat and access drinks freely throughout the day. Meal times are observed to be a delightful social occasion where children eat together in a calm and relaxed environment. Children are encouraged to feed themselves independently, whilst positive interaction between adults and children fosters language and socialisation skills.

Children's physical health is very well promoted. They explore, test and develop physical control in stimulating daily indoor and outdoor experiences. Staff have an excellent understanding of each child's stage of development, which means the children are confident to try out new skills, ask for help when needed and set their own limits within a safe environment. For example, children are able to play outside in the secure and safe area where they climb apparatus and ride wheeled vehicles along a track with increasing skill and confidence. Resources and activities are constantly evolving to meet the developmental needs of the children. This includes incorporating activities to encourage balancing skills, hand to eye co-ordination skills and learning to throw and catch. Children enjoy parachute games, for example, and negotiating their way in, over, down and around a large climbing frame and slide. The children are offered the opportunity to have fresh air regardless of the weather as staff ensure they are appropriately clothed. They experience splashing in puddles in the rain as they wear wellingtons and take umbrellas outside. Children develop their co-ordination and a good awareness of space during the weekly sessions with a visiting sports specialist.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very warm, welcoming, child-centred environment. Bright and stimulating displays of the children's creative work and photographs of the children engaged in activities increases the welcoming atmosphere and children's sense of belonging. There is a superb range of high quality equipment and furniture available, allowing the children to play, rest and eat in comfort. The setting provides an extensive range of resources to help children progress in all areas of their development. Children also have access to an excellent range of natural resources, for example, treasure baskets and sensory play materials. Resources are stored within the children's reach and are clearly labelled with pictures and text to promote children's independence and decision making.

The children learn about keeping themselves safe through discussion and planned activities. For example, visits from the fire service and lollipop lady provide the children with stimulating first hand experiences to help their understanding about fire and road safety. Staff gently remind the children to sit down when they are having a drink and that they walk indoors but can run outdoors. Children are developing confidence in trying new challenges, such as learning to use scissors correctly, because staff support them by staying close and teaching them to use equipment safely.

Staff have an excellent awareness of safety. They conduct daily risk assessments of internal and external areas, record their findings and report any issues that may pose a risk. Children are kept safe due to highly effective security measures; the entry system is secure and a record of visitors is maintained. Emergency evacuation procedures have been practised with the children on a regular basis, so they develop an awareness of what to do in an emergency, such as a fire. Comprehensive risk assessments for outings, ensure that safety is continually monitored and reviewed. Children are informed in advance of any outings so they gain an understanding of how they must behave to keep themselves safe. For example, holding hands with a member of staff when walking along the road. Children also wear high visibility jackets to ensure further safety and protection. Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because staff are extremely vigilant in reducing potential hazards. No safety issues have been identified.

Children are fully safeguarded because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put the policy into practice. Staff knowledge and understanding is regularly updated through attendance on courses and information provided for staff to read. All of the required documentation is in place, ensuring children's welfare is effectively safeguarded. The policy is available to parents so they are informed of staff's responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children receive a warm and friendly welcome from staff which helps them to feel happy and secure. Babies and toddlers receive sensitive support from familiar staff which helps them to develop in confidence and enjoy their activities. Parents are consulted about routines for babies which ensures the care received by the babies is consistent. Young children show a keen interest in what is happening around them by their willingness to explore and participate. For example, young children thoroughly enjoy exploring with their senses as they play with materials, such as sand, jelly and custard powder and water. They are stimulated by the smell, texture and the taste.

The implementation of an effective key worker system ensures that staff know the children very well and provide a wide range of activities which encourage their development and learning. Children concentrate very well at creative activities. They become engrossed in creating collage pictures using glue and different materials. They are able to choose from a wide range of materials available and create their own pictures without adult direction. This encourages the children to make choices, fully explore the materials they use and be freely creative. They are clearly proud of their independent achievements. The children sing and explore musical instruments often. They enjoy listening to stories and talking to each other and the adults, which helps them to develop into skilful communicators. As they play, the adults ask them questions to encourage their learning. The staff have introduced effective planning based around the 'Birth to three matters' framework to ensure a good range of activities for younger children. This is clearly linked to observations and assessments of children's progress.

Children attending the before and after school club develop a sense of responsibility and independence. For example, they make independent choices and decisions about what they want to do and they influence the range of activities by making their suggestions about what they would like to do whilst attending.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Key staff have a very good understanding of how children learn which enables them to provide a good range of learning experiences. Less experienced staff are developing a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum because effective mentoring is in place. The learning environment is very well organised which ensures children are encouraged and are self-sufficient in their play. Plans are thorough and they reflect the needs of the range of children attending. This ensures all children experience the full range of activities at an appropriate level of challenge. Children's progress is regularly tracked which ensures observations are frequently recorded and used to plan their next steps. Spontaneous questioning is used to heighten the challenge for older and more able children.

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. They develop close friendships with their peers and members of staff. Children develop a good sense of independence as they help to tidy up, to put on their own coats and help themselves to equipment. However, snack time is not made effective use of to develop the children's self help skills. Children enjoy regular story and circle time which encourages speaking and listening skills. Children enjoy interactive stories as this encourages them to join in and take active roles. The environment is rich in text and children have opportunities for mark making and recording for a purpose throughout the setting.

Children frequently count objects and are beginning to recognise and name numbers, this is supported by the introduction of number rhymes and action games. They use positional language, such as big, tall and small and they learn to sort objects by size, shape and colour when they play with the graded cat statues. Children's physical development is very well promoted. They are provided with a good range of tools and materials which they use to cut, pour and mould. They enjoy music sessions and they frequently play outdoors where they can develop new physical skills. Outdoor activities are carefully included in planning which ensures these activities are varied and challenging.

Children investigate seasonal changes and they explore animals, bugs and their habitats. They go on nature walks to collect things for an autumn display. They have opportunities to discover how things work because they use the camera to record their own work and access programmable

toys. Children use their imaginations in role play areas where they dress up and act out various roles. Following a discussion and story about cats, the children enjoy wrapping themselves in pieces of fur fabric and pretending to be cats. In the discovery area they make 'paw prints' in the soil and use the magnifiers to hunt for the hidden wild cats. Children explore a good variety of media, such as sand, water, paint and glue to design their own models and pictures. For example, they look at pictures of cats to help guide them in their own designs.

The adults support the children very well during play. They ask questions which stimulate the children's thinking and imagination, and which challenge them well. The staff observe the children closely and use the observations to effectively plan the next steps in their learning. This ensures that all children make good progress in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have access to a good range of resources that provide positive images of gender, culture and disability. These include books, small world imaginative toys, dolls, jigsaws and dressing up clothes. Children learn about the diversity of our society as they participate in various celebrations and festivals. These activities help children to learn about the wider world and to respect and value differences. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Good behaviour is actively encouraged by all staff members, who are positive role models, and support children to play fairly, share and wait their turn. During a sound lotto game, the children helped each other to identify the sound they had heard on the tape and all children were praised for their kindness in helping each other. Children are responsive to the meaningful praise and encouragement they receive and behave well. They negotiate with each other to resolve minor squabbles without the need for staff intervention. Stories and discussions are used to help children learn about good manners and feelings.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents of children who attend the pre-school group are provided with written information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and activity plans are displayed for them to view. They have some opportunities to be involved in their children's learning during theme work, as they are asked to bring some resources from home. Daily discussions keep parents up to date about their child's day and any issues. Parents receive lots of verbal feedback about their child's development and are able to view their child's progress records at any time. However, they are not provided with planned opportunities to contribute to their child's developmental records so they are fully involved in their learning.

Regulatory requirements are met as staff have devised a suitable complaints procedure and relevant documents are displayed as required.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The effective organisation of the provision ensures that children are safe, happy and well cared for. The staff make effective use of the space, toys and equipment to ensure that children are well stimulated and enjoy the time they spend in the setting. They work very well as a team, effectively putting the policies and procedures into practice each day to ensure that the sessions run smoothly. Effective deployment and staff to child ratios ensures that children are very well supported and their individual needs are met.

Children's welfare is protected by clear recruitment, vetting and induction procedures. A secure induction ensures all staff are made familiar with the setting's operational plan. The staff work well as a team because the management structure is clear and they have defined roles and responsibilities which they are required to undertake. The proprietors play an active role in the day to day running of the nursery which ensures room leaders are appropriately supported in the decision making processes. The managers have a good awareness of the strengths and areas for development within the setting through a detailed and ongoing self evaluation system.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The staff have a very good awareness of the Foundation Stage in order to plan and provide a range of activities which help the children to make good progress. They are able to evaluate the nursery education effectively and plan future developments to enhance the educational provision. They have a good commitment to the continuous development of the provision and this is reflected in the opportunities offered to staff to attend training.

The documentation which supports the care and learning of the children is generally well maintained and recorded. However, records of staff attendances lack the necessary detail required. Detailed policies and procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect any changes in the practice.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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.

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):

- ensure that records of staff attendances are appropriately detailed

- ensure that medication records are appropriately detailed.

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):

- provide parents with opportunities to contribute to children's progress records
- improve opportunities for the development of children's independence at snack time.

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