

Imagine at the John Radcliffe

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY345412
Inspection date	23 April 2007
Inspector	Jill Milton
Setting Address	John Radcliffe Hospital, Headley Way, Headington, OXFORD, OX3 9DU
Telephone number	07866 251 979
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Registered person	The Midcounties Co-Operative Society
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Imagine at the John Radcliffe is a 96 place nursery for children aged from birth to eight years. It opened in 2007 and is one of six provisions run by Midcounties Co-operative Society. The nursery has five main rooms where children play and it operates from the ground floor of the new children's hospital on the John Radcliffe site. There is an enclosed garden area for outdoor play. The setting provides places for families employed by the hospital trust, the staff of the John Radcliffe hospital and members of the public.

The nursery is open on weekdays, from 07.00 to 18.00, all year around. There are currently 37 children on roll and of these seven are in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery supports a small number of children for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery employs seven staff to work directly with the children. More than half hold a nationally recognised qualification and one member of staff is attending training. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff have a satisfactory regard to children's health. They work with parents to ensure they share information about any special health needs or dietary requirements. The display of a chart listing common childhood illnesses and exclusion times helps all the adults to be aware of the nursery policy relating to maintaining the health of children. Staff follow appropriate procedures to record accidents and on occasions when children require medication.

Children receive some reminders to wash their hands during the day after using the bathroom or before eating. The new child-friendly facilities with easy to operate taps and low level sinks make these times fun. Staff make regular use of antibacterial sprays throughout the day to maintain the cleanliness of the nursery. When staff change children's nappies they chat or sing to them and suitable procedures are in place to reduce the risk of cross infection. The children eat a suitable range of nutritious foods during the day. Meals prepared in the hospital kitchens provide the children with a hot lunch. They are learning to enjoy healthy choices like fresh fruit or vegetables. Staff provide children with fluids during the day to quench their thirst though they cannot access fresh drinking water independently as they play.

Children sleep and rest during the day to balance their times of active play. Staff check on sleeping babies and toddlers at regular intervals, making suitable use of monitoring devices. Indoors the younger children have access to wooden equipment which matches their growing desire to explore and climb and babies sit with support so that they can enjoy looking around. All children spend some time in the day in the garden area where they enjoy the fresh air and sunshine. The children have some opportunities to develop their physical skills though there is only a basic range of equipment available to them and little to challenge the older or more able children. Staff are aware of the current limitations and have plans in place to improve the area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children play in a range of spacious rooms which are equipped with plenty of new wooden furniture. The rooms currently in use have natural light and the staff can control the warmth and ventilation to ensure children are comfortable. The purpose built setting has suitable facilities to enable staff to attend to children's needs, such as kitchens and a laundry. Children play with resources that are of good quality and chosen to match their different ages. Many items are on display at child height to enable children to make their own choices though few items have word or picture labels to encourage early literacy. The range of resources at present is adequate though staff are keenly awaiting the delivery of more toys to enable them to offer the children greater variety.

Staff have appropriate systems in place to monitor access to the setting and to record the presence of adults and children. Children and staff are aware of the fire evacuation procedure for the building. During the day the staff alert children to safety issues, like not running indoors so that they become aware of how to keep themselves safe. Staff use written risk assessments to identify hazards outside and there are a number of features indoors in use, such as finger guards on doors, to prevent accidents. However children's safety is compromised since no

socket covers are in place throughout the nursery. This potential hazard appears on the written risk assessment of the nursery though staff do not make use of these documents at present.

The adults working with children in the setting have the necessary checks in place to reflect their suitability. The staff are aware of the importance of safeguarding children and there is a sound policy for child protection. The staff know where to take any concerns they may have for a child's welfare and senior staff have access to information to guide their next steps.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children attending the nursery are becoming familiar with the daily routine and the new environment. Staff bring the babies into their own safe area within the toddler room to provide more interest when numbers attending are low. Children receive cuddles from staff during the day and most are eager to engage in play from the basic range on offer. The children are experiencing times of coming together as a group with short singing times and sociable snack times. The staff working with children under three years are aware of the Birth to three matters framework but they are not yet using it effectively to monitor the children's development and plan the range of weekly activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. The children over three years who are in receipt of nursery education funding are spending a pleasant time at the nursery. They are learning to be part of a group and to separate from their parents and carers. The children play sociably with their peers and they enjoy making up stories together in their imaginative play. They are learning something of the wider world and how to respect others as they play with resources that provide positive messages about diversity. The children have opportunities to make choices since resources are on display within their reach.

The children have few opportunities to progress with their communication, language and literacy. Conversations during the day, whilst friendly, do little to encourage the children to think for themselves and express their ideas. Some basic mark making may take place though there are few examples of children progressing with their early writing. They do enjoy shared stories especially when it includes a chance to dance to songs that are part of the tale. The children select books for themselves and demonstrate their awareness of how to turn pages correctly. Staff do not provide many word labels on resources or alert the children to the sounds of letters so that they may progress with their early reading.

The resources to promote mathematics are of good quality and some number and shape work took place during a recent topic. Children may choose to explore the resources in the number area but a lack of adult support means children quickly lose interest. Some days pass without a mention of mathematics. Topic work provides the children with a basic introduction to the seasons and their attractive paintings of flowers during spring time are on display in their room. The children do not currently use resources to introduce them to technology.

Children enjoy imaginative play during the day and in the long times of free choice they select this option most frequently. Staff do provide a suitable range of resources to enable the children to develop their stories using cars and models of ships or houses. Some days lack alternative ways for children to develop their creativity and explore with their senses for example by using

paint, water or dough. Children develop skills such as co-ordination as they complete puzzles or put together construction bricks.

Staff plan a basic outline of the day and include a focus activity for the older children. However the adults tend to supervise play but not extend the children's learning with appropriate questions. Planning of the day is not effective since children spend long times in free play which is enjoyable but doing little to help them progress along the stepping stones to the early learning goals. The system in place to monitor the children's development does not provide sufficient information about the children's achievements and staff do not use it to plan the next steps in children's learning. The teaching does not differentiate between the children's individual ages and abilities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Children are beginning to settle into the new nursery setting. Staff help them to feel a sense of belonging by providing named coat pegs and space for older ones to store their own things. The nursery operates an equal opportunities policy and uses resources and posters to promote positive messages about the wider world. Children take part in celebrating festivals from their own culture and those of different beliefs.

There are no children currently attending the nursery who have identified learning difficulties or disabilities. The room staff have avenues of support through the parent company until one of the team takes on the role of co-ordinator for special needs and has access to training in this area. The children behave well in the nursery and they are learning the difference between right and wrong. Staff explain to them when some actions are undesirable and they provide guidance on how to share and take turns. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children is fostered.

Staff provide written daily feedback for parents with children under three years helping parents to be aware of what is happening in the nursery day. New parents receive information produced by the owners of the nursery which provides a general overview of the care on offer. When families start at the nursery they can use settling-in visits to enable children to become familiar with the environment. Staff collect a suitable range of information from parents, such as any special needs, so that they can care for the children. Parents express satisfaction with the standards of care in the rooms though some concern about staff changes. The written complaints procedure is not freely accessible to parents as required by regulation.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of nursery education funding is inadequate. There is little good quality information available to parents about the Foundation Stage. Staff do not make effective use of displays around the nursery to share information about children's learning. Child records do not contain sufficient up-to-date information about children's progress and achievements for staff to share with parents. There are few opportunities for shared learning between nursery and home.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The parent company of the nursery has a comprehensive set of policy documents in place that take into account the outcomes for children. At times in this nursery the company procedures are not being accurately followed leading to weaknesses in day-to-day practice. This impacts

on the children for example when staff do not address potential safety hazards promptly. There are secure systems in place for checking that adults are suitable to work with children and staff follow a set induction plan when they start to work for the company. Regular meetings with senior staff take place and on-going training is to be on offer as the staff sort their roles and responsibilities. Staff store documentation securely and maintain the confidentiality of information relating to families. The parent company react to sudden staff changes by bringing in senior staff from other nurseries though such changes are not notified to Ofsted promptly which is required by regulation.

The leadership and management of the nursery education are inadequate. Although there are procedures available to enable staff to identify their strengths and weaknesses these are not in use at present. Staff do not currently take into account the needs of the older children and much of the day is spent in one mixed age group. Whilst this may benefit the children's social development and make staff supervision easier it does little to promote children's learning in key areas like mathematics and literacy. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- implement thorough risk assessments and address potential hazards to ensure children's safety
- ensure that Ofsted is informed of significant events promptly
- ensure parents receive written information about the complaints procedure

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- develop staff understanding of how to interact effectively to support children's learning through play
- develop an effective method to record children's progress and achievements; use the information to plan their next steps in learning and share it with parents
- review the planning of the day to ensure the older children receive a programme more suited to their ages and abilities
- improve the quality of information provided to parents about the educational curriculum

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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