

Whitwick Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY301356
Inspection date	09 May 2007
Inspector	Shami Kumar
Setting Address	Market Place, Whitwick, Coalville, Leicestershire, LE67 5DT
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Registered person	Magic Nurseries A 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?

Whitwick Day Nursery is one of eight nurseries run by the Magic Nurseries Organisation. The nursery opened in 1994 and operates from an old school building in the village of Whitwick in Leicester. There are four rooms available to the children which consist of the baby, toddler, nursery and pre-school rooms with toilet and nappy changing facilities. There is an enclosed area suitable for outdoor play.

The setting is registered to provide care for a maximum of 71 children under eight years at any one time. There are currently 103 children on roll. This includes 30 funded three-year-olds and 15 funded four-year-olds. Children attend a variety of sessions. The nursery opens Monday to Fridays from 07:30 until 18:00, all year except for public holidays.

There are 15 members of staff available to work with children, and of those 11 hold an appropriate early years qualification. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nursery Association and receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and well-maintained environment. Children learn the importance of good hygiene practices as they become increasingly independent in their personal care through well established routines. For example, children begin to understand why they must wash their hands before meal times and after using the toilet. When asked, a pre-school child said 'we wash our hands because they're dirty and we have to get rid of the germs'. Children see low-level pictures within the bathroom that support their awareness of good hygiene routines. Their independence is fostered by the provision of low-level toilets and sinks which they can use safely. They access liquid soap and dry their hands using paper towels. Children are encouraged to become responsible for their personal care by brushing their teeth after meals to keep them clean and healthy.

Children's good health is promoted by staff who effectively follow the provision's health and hygiene procedures. For example, they wash tables before and after meals and potties and changing mats are cleaned with anti-bacterial spray after use. However, children's health is not fully promoted because staff do not consistently maintain good hygiene practices during nappy changing. Staff are careful about hand washing and there are cleaning routines within each room. Clean linen and blankets are provided for each child when sleeping in a cot or on mats. Babies and young children rest and sleep according to their individual needs. Children calmly and comfortably fall asleep as they feel safe and secure in their surroundings with staff ensuring that they are closely supervised.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because many staff have current first aid certificates and therefore any accidents can be dealt with effectively. First aid boxes are fully stocked and parents are made aware of the detailed policy and the procedure that is followed when a child is taken ill. Clear information is given to parents about exclusion times relating to common childhood and other illnesses to minimise possible cross-infection. Details of accidents and medication administered are recorded precisely, ensuring parents are fully informed about their children's care.

Children actively learn about healthy eating through regular discussion with staff and through topic work. Children remark that if they eat their vegetables they will be big and strong like the Power Rangers. Children have their health and dietary needs met because staff work well with parents and any special requirements are clearly displayed to remind staff as they serve meals. Children enjoy a healthy, varied diet and are well nourished as meals and snacks are prepared on site and are provided at regular times throughout the day. The children enjoy home cooked meals such as pies and lasagnes accompanied with fresh vegetables on a daily basis. Home made snacks such as cakes and biscuits are also provided. Children are provided with drinks and they are able to access fresh drinking water independently. Meals are relaxed, social occasions when children sit together and chat happily. Food is attractively presented and plentiful, with the more able children helping themselves to seconds. Babies and young children's health and emotional needs are well fostered by the warm relationships they develop with the staff. Staff carefully follow sleep routines and young babies are held comfortably and fed and nurtured according to their needs.

Children have access to a good range of activities which contribute to their good health and well-being. They have many opportunities to develop their physical skills through access to

both indoor and outdoor activities where they are encouraged and supported to develop new skills. For example, children enjoy music and movement sessions, negotiate the different climbing frames, learn to pedal bikes and jump and balance on trampolines. Children learn to move confidently and show a good awareness of space as they manoeuvre around each other to avoid collisions. Children access a range of equipment that encourages their fine physical control effectively. For example, they choose from a range of tools and objects, such as pencils, scissors, threading beads and construction equipment as they develop their hand to eye co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure environment that is well organised to meet their needs. Their safety is further enhanced because staff have a good understanding of safety issues. For example, staff are deployed inside and out to ensure all areas are well supervised. Daily checks are carried out to ensure no hazards are accessible to children and the entrance to the premises is well monitored. Children can move safely and independently in all areas, as risks have been identified and minimised by staff and there are well organised checking routines. For example, sockets are protected, the temperature of the water is regularly checked and sleeping children are checked every ten minutes. Children are protected when using climbing play equipment in the outside areas as staff ensure these are placed on absorbing surfaces. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place throughout the nursery and these are updated regularly or when necessary. Children have a sound awareness of fire safety by practising emergency escape routines. Fire safety equipment such as fire extinguishers are in place and fire evacuation procedures are clearly displayed.

The premises are bright and colourful with children's art work and hanging mobiles prominently displayed in all areas. Resources are arranged attractively so that children are encouraged to self-select safely. All parents and children are made very welcome. Younger children and babies are provided with appropriate equipment which allows them to investigate and explore their surroundings safely as they begin to sit, crawl and then walk. Children use clean, appropriate toys and resources which are checked regularly for safety. Children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe through daily routines and staff explaining safe practices. For example, staff remind children not to run inside and to sit on the chairs properly. Children learn to protect themselves when going on outings as staff talk to the children about road safety and 'stranger danger'.

Children are well safeguarded because staff are confident with their role in child protection and have a good understanding of child protection policies and procedures. Managers are fully aware of reporting procedures and most staff have attended training. Policies are shared with parents to promote a common understanding on safeguarding children. Clear operational procedures are in place to ensure children's safety if they are collected by a different person. For example, staff seek proof before children leave the premises by asking for a password.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The care and learning experiences for children are good. Children are supported to deal with the separation from parents and carers and develop close relationships with staff caring for their age range. All children are happy and confident. They build warm and trusting relationships with staff, with many children giving spontaneous cuddles. Staff are developing their use of

the 'Birth to three matters' framework and accessing training to ensure that babies and young children are making good progress in all areas. Staff plan the transition through the nursery well so that children remain secure and happy and settle quickly.

Children arrive eager to learn and confidently self-select toys and activities from a good range of resources. Staff know the children well and they provide first-hand learning experiences for the children which are both adult-led and child-initiated. Babies are supported in their developing needs such as sitting, crawling and taking their first steps. Staff spend time holding, talking and playing with them and they develop their early communication skills as staff respond to their non-verbal sounds, smiles and gestures during play. Babies and young children have good opportunities to develop their senses as they explore with a variety of objects and textures. For instance, they enjoy touching the sand, cornflour, pasta and explore sound as they shake a variety of musical toys and push buttons and excitedly watch what happens.

Children's personal and social development is well promoted. They have good relationships with both their peer group and staff. They confidently initiate conversations and talk about events outside the setting. Children are well supported when trying out new activities. They have a range of interesting experiences during a typical week, such as making shields or horses for their role play area which is currently a castle. All children enjoy and share stories, songs and rhymes. Staff listen to and value what children say and they are encouraged to speak confidently and share their personal experiences within the group.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning for the nursery education is good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and plan an effective curriculum to progress children along the stepping stones. Observations and assessments for children are carried out but as these have recently been revised, they do not currently identify children's individual learning for the next steps. The manager and all staff working with the funded children are involved in planning, and recording assessments of children's progress are carried out. Staff know why children are doing the activities and what they expect the children to learn from them. Planning is beginning to show how activities can be varied so that learning outcomes are achieved. The staff are caring, patient and supportive towards the children. They know the children well and motivate the children to learn through planned and spontaneous activities. Staff use effective methods to develop children's memory and learning skills. Staff skilfully ask questions which encourage them to think and predict. For example, 'where do you think is safe', and 'who comes next after the snake'. Information is gained verbally from parents regarding their children's starting points. Children are developing some good friendships amongst themselves and greet each other eagerly when they arrive. Children show an awareness of their own needs and that of others. For example, a child shows concern for another when he hurts himself. Children are interested, excited and motivated to learn. Children sit and concentrate well during large group situations. For example, they enjoy listening to group stories and join in enthusiastically to well known verses. They take an active part in group discussions when they talk about their families, having a scary dream and going on holiday. Children spend long periods of time making models of cars from construction sets, filling containers to make sand castles and making marks on the white board. Children confidently chat happily as they play and work together and discuss what they have made. For example, they talk about making a sock puppet, making a bead necklace for the role play area and collecting items to go to the beach. Children have opportunities of feeling special as they take turns in holding a teddy bear when they relate and speak about their own news to the other children.

Children make good progress as a result of a range of interesting activities some of which are child-led. They have many opportunities to use their own initiative and develop independence whilst engaged in both indoor and outdoor activities. For example, a child asks if they can play the 'shape chooser game' which he organises with the help of an adult. Children talk between each other and confidently explain what they make. For instance, children talk about making a flower with shapes, drawing houses and cars. They listen enthusiastically to stories and have opportunities to look at books independently. There are labelled words displayed around the room and laminated name cards for the children. However, these are not consistently used to enable children to begin to recognise their names and how sounds of letters link to words. Staff read stories expressively, involving the children by asking for their opinions. They sit and listen to stories about 'The Gruffalo' and a dinosaur. They confidently talk about having a new person in their family, going to Centre Parks and talk to their mummy on a mobile phone. Children have many opportunities to develop pre-writing skills and mark making through a range of activities. These include making marks on the white board, using various writing materials in the graphics area and using brushes and rollers in the outdoor area.

Children are beginning to see connections in numbers, shapes and measures. They match and sort and are using mathematical language such as more than, one less, to help them to solve problems through practical activities such as stories, rhymes, games and puzzles. They confidently name shapes such as squares, triangles, circles and rectangles. Most children count beyond 10 and recognise many colours and numerals. They focus on a particular colour for the week and their understanding of numbers is reinforced through planned and spontaneous activities. Children develop an awareness of weight and capacity through the use of resources and activities such as sand and water.

Children learn to make sense of the world around them by investigating and exploring their curiosity through first hand experiences. Children learn about change as they grow sunflowers, lettuces and vegetables and watch them as they grow. They look at the different changes of weather and talk about different clothes they would wear on the beach. Children use the computer to develop their co-ordination and skills in using the mouse. They are well supported by staff whilst using the different programmes. There are additional programmable toys to support their learning and develop their understanding of everyday technology. These include cash tills, mobile phones, calculators and microwave ovens. Children learn about the natural world as they talk about different animals and enjoy visits from 'Zoo lab' when they look at interesting reptiles. They talk about past and present events in their lives and use time jars which helps them to learn about the passing of time. They confidently talk about going into a new house and going to the doctors.

Children develop their awareness of cultures and beliefs from celebrations and the positive resources which they have access to. These include dolls, puzzles, dressing-up clothes and play figures. There is a range of posters displayed on the walls which reflect diversity and disability. They celebrate a range of festivals, participate in activities and try out associated food. Children have good opportunities to use their imagination as they take part in role play based on first-hand experiences. For example, they are supported in making a rocket, a submarine and a castle and extend their learning by making shields, boats, horses for the role play area. They pretend to dress up as kings, queens, knights and princesses and protect their castle from dragons. The children have good opportunities for experimenting with differing textures. These include water, sand, play dough, cornflour, pasta and craft materials. All children enthusiastically enjoy singing songs and participating in action rhymes which include 'Twinkle, Twinkle chocolate bar' and 'Bob the builder'. Children particularly enjoy participating in weekly music and movement sessions and explore sounds of different musical instruments.

Children enjoy a good range of physical activities that help them to develop their confidence and skills when using large and small apparatus, tools and equipment. They balance on stilts and manoeuvre wheeled toys around obstacles. Children confidently use climbing equipment and need little support to jump and land safely. Children are taught to handle and control small objects. For example, they pick up small beads and handle scissors, pencils, paint brushes and cutlery with good control. They have a positive attitude towards physical exercise and an awareness of how this helps them to stay healthy.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are respected as individuals and are encouraged and supported to play an active role in the nursery. Their individual needs are well supported by staff who know them well and respond sensitively to their needs. All children are warmly welcomed and feel a sense of belonging as they take part in the life of the nursery and identify well with their key worker. They move freely between activities and are comfortable with routines. Babies bond well with the familiar staff and therefore feel secure. The setting supports children who speak English as an additional language as they work closely with parents to meet their individual needs. Currently, there are no children with special needs attending but staff have past experience and ensure that their needs are met. Staff take time talking to parents before children start, to find out about their routines, interests, information about their family, and anything that is special to them. This enables all children to settle and enjoy their time in the setting.

Children become aware of their own and other cultures through a range of resources and topic work. Children learn to value diversity because resources are well integrated within their play environment. For example, posters decorate the walls, puzzles, books, and role play items positively represent different people. Children celebrate a variety of festivals, such as Christmas, Diwali, Easter and Chinese New Year. They taste different foods, dress up, make rangoli patterns and paint dragons. All children are included in the activities and routines. They are encouraged to respect and value themselves and each other. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are well behaved because they feel secure and are well occupied. They are well mannered, polite and considerate to others. Staff use positive strategies for managing behaviour throughout the nursery. This helps children learn to understand behaviour boundaries and how their behaviour may affect others. They are starting to show concern for each other and some children have developed friendship groups. Children demonstrate a good awareness of sharing and taking turns and are consistently praised for their efforts. Staff act as good role models to the children, and they listen and treat them with respect. They are keen to help and tidy away activities. They play together happily, for example, a group of children play co-operatively in the role play area and another group play in the sand tray. They arrive eager to learn and assist each other in their play. Staff clap and applaud the babies and younger children when they have achieved which increases their self-esteem and confidence.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents of children receiving nursery education are encouraged to share details when children make developmental achievements at home or reach milestones. Valuable written information is provided for parents to cover both care and education. For example, they receive written information regarding how the Foundation Stage is implemented and daily sheets are completed on younger children, relating to their day. Parents receive information about topics and themes and they are given suggestions on how to extend their children's learning at home. Parents comment very positively about the nursery

and feel supported by the approachable staff who create a friendly and sociable atmosphere. Regular communication during the day, assessment recording and invitations to come into the setting to look at children's records are examples of systems used to keep parents well informed. Children benefit because detailed information about children's routines, interests and their starting points are sought to help staff plan for the individual child. Parents are aware of their child's key worker and are confident in liaising and discussing aspects with them. They are invited to attend for settling-in visits when they are shown around and introduced to routines of the nursery. They are able to formally and informally discuss their child's progress and have access to their children's assessment records. Parents speak positively about their children's experience in the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The staff at the setting have high regard for the well-being of the children in their care, with separate managers responsible for certain aspects within the nursery. Effective organisation of the setting ensures that children are extremely well cared for by qualified and suitable staff. Comprehensive policies and procedures protect children and are effectively implemented to promote all the outcomes for children. The managers supervise their staff well, with a robust recruitment, induction and on-going appraisal system in place. Managers are proactive in ensuring that the practice of all staff contributes positively to children's good health, safety and enjoyment.

Staff organise the space within the premises well to provide a child-centred environment, with all four rooms and the outdoor area in use for most of the sessions. Children are happy, relaxed and cared for in a friendly environment. Rooms are welcoming and resources are stored safely and are easily accessible. Activities are varied and familiar routines enable children to feel secure. The wide range of experiences supports children's learning and encourages their independence and freedom of choice. Staff are well deployed and children receive an effective level of interaction and supervision. Staff are employed to provide cover and the manager is supernumerary. There is an additional quality and regional manager available to provide support and guidance for the setting. Children are cared for in age related groups and an effective key worker system is in place which supports their learning and play. There are close links with staff from different rooms making children's transition from one room to another a positive experience. All legally required documentation is in excellent order and reviewed regularly.

Most staff are qualified and work together as part of an established team. Staff have regular opportunities to reflect on their own practice, through discussions at staff meetings and appraisals. Staff demonstrate that they are highly motivated and committed to ongoing training to improve their knowledge. Children's play and learning experiences are enhanced because all staff are encouraged to develop their existing knowledge and understanding of child care related issues. Staff are encouraged to evaluate and improve their own practice and they contribute ideas within staff meetings. Children's welfare is exceptionally well promoted by visible and committed management, working alongside an enthusiastic staff team.

The leadership and management of funded children is good. Nursery education is monitored and developed to ensure that children make good progress towards the early learning goals. The staff work well as a team and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. All children are supported well to achieve their potential by staff knowing their starting points and working with parents and carers to support this progress. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan activities to support children's learning. Managers provide support

for staff and they have a clear vision of how they want the setting to operate for the children. Strengths and weaknesses of the setting are identified and action plans are implemented to ensure that objectives are met. The management is proactive in their approach and encourages all staff to play a full role in the setting. The setting has recently devised a new planning and assessment recording system so although staff evaluate the activities provided for the children there is currently little evidence to show how children make progress and how they will be supported in their next steps for learning.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was required to ensure that hazards in the outdoor play area were made safe or inaccessible to children. They were asked to provide appropriate play opportunities for children under three years which allows them to build on their natural curiosity as learners by incorporating 'Birth to three matters'. They were required to keep an accurate and up to date record of staff hours of attendance.

Since the last inspection the setting now ensures that the outdoor area is safe as regular daily checks are carried out and all hazards have been removed. The setting has worked well in providing a variety of play opportunities for younger children to build on their natural curiosity. These include experimenting with different textures such as sand, water, cornflour, cooked pasta and musical and sensory equipment as well as treasure baskets. The setting now keeps an accurate and up to date record of staff's attendance with times of arrival and departure. These aspects have improved the safety and well-being of children.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was asked to improve the planning and assessments to ensure children's individual learning needs are identified and supported to ensure the next steps for learning. They were required to improve children's understanding of number, letters and sounds and provide meaningful opportunities for children to become independent writers by using everyday activities. They were also asked to ensure that all parents receive information about the Foundation Stage of learning, and are fully informed of their children's next steps for learning and ways to support this at home.

Since the last inspection the setting has organised a maths area where children are able to develop their understanding of numbers using a range of resources as well as numbers displayed around the room. Parents are now given clear written information regarding the Foundation Stage, current topics and what children are expected to learn. They are also given guidelines on techniques to support children with their learning at home. For example, reading them relevant stories and pointing out appropriate aspects which include current topics. There are now many opportunities for children to become independent writers. For example, they have access to a well stocked graphics area and they are able to independently select a range of writing materials. They are encouraged to mark make using white boards, chalking, writing activities in the role play area and the children paint using water in the outdoor area. The setting has recently devised new planning documents and assessment recording so currently they are unable to clearly identify children's individual needs for the next steps in their learning. So this remains as a further recommendation. The setting has made some improvement with regard to having letters displayed around the room and laminate name cards for the children, however, children need to further develop their understanding of letters and sounds so this remains as a recommendation.

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

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 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 staff maintain good hygiene practices regarding nappy changing

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 opportunities to develop children's understanding of letters and sounds using everyday activities
- continue to improve the planning and assessment systems to ensure children's individual learning needs and next steps are identified and supported.

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