

Dimples Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

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THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Dimples Day Nursery is privately owned and opened in 2002.

The nursery operates from two purpose built buildings in a residential area of Darenth within easy access of the motorway and local facilities. The nursery group has access to eight rooms, an enclosed outdoor area, and a garden for all the children's use. Children attending, come from the wider community.

Children attend a variety of sessions each week and this includes funded three and four year olds. The nursery opens five days a week during the year from 07.30 to 18.30.

There are currently 146 children on roll at the nursery. Of these, 27 children currently receive funding for nursery education. At present there are no children attending with special educational needs or children who speak English as an additional language, however, three children speak dual languages.

There are forty three full and part time staff who work with the children. 33 of these hold Early Years qualifications.

The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and the area Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). The nursery achieved the Kent Kite Mark accreditation in August 2007 and have recently been awarded the Heartbeat award for promoting healthy food.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive from being cared for in an environment where an exceptional standard of hygiene practices are maintained. All children learn about hygiene routines through washing their hands appropriately, for example, after messy play, digging in the garden allotment and before snack and meal times. Pictures and posters at their level provide children with gentle reminders. Older and more able children fully understand the importance of hand washing and they have access to liquid soap, hot and cold water and paper towels and younger children and babies have hands wiped with individual flannels that have been boiled prior to use ensuring the risk of cross-infection is minimised. All children are encouraged to brush their teeth after meals and after sleep times. Children have individual sterilised cups with own toothbrush and toothpaste provided by parents each term helping them to feel secure and have a real sense of belonging. Children enthusiastically brush their teeth and talk about when the tooth fairy visited the nursery. Children in each room are cared for by staff who are first aid trained and excellent procedures are in place to support children who require prescribed medication. Staff are aware of the medical needs of individual children and first aid boxes are located in each room and are easily accessible to staff. This ensures that all children receive extensive care and attention if they become unwell, have an accident or require medication.

Children develop excellent healthy eating habits as staff encourage them to try different foods and constantly talk to them during meal times about foods that are good for them. Meals and snacks at the Nursery are very well balanced and nutritious, offering a wide variety of foods. The menu is constantly reviewed by the nursery cook removing processed foods such as cakes, crisps and biscuits and drinks that contain sugar. As a result children are offered foods low in salt, colour additives and sugar and all meals are made from fresh ingredients delivered daily. Children's individual dietary needs are very well met by staff who are highly aware of their allergies and dislikes. These are clearly displayed in each room of the nursery, including the kitchen, so that all staff can check them at any time. Facilities used to prepare food for children are of a high standard of cleanliness and have been checked by an environmental health officer. The nursery have achieved healthy food awards and safer food, better business certification to ensure that they are consistently striving to improve and maintain children's healthy diet. Children are able to rest and relax in comfortable surroundings according to their individual needs and daily routines. Fresh drinking water is provided freely in 'pop-top' bottles that are sterilised daily. Each child from two years of age have their own bottle of water with their name on. Children help themselves to their bottles, throughout the day, encouraging their independence and enabling staff to monitor each individual child's daily fluid intake. Young babies receive bottles and beakers of milk and water consistently throughout the day. Staff maintain excellent written records for each child to ensure their individual health and dietary requirements are met.

Highly stimulating indoor and outdoor experiences help the children explore how their bodies work, for example, when they enthusiastically dig in the allotment area or play on the climbing frames and slides. Gardening activities, such as watering the plants or picking vegetables,

further develop their knowledge of how things grow and what we need to stay healthy. Children expertly manipulate and handle trowels and develop their hand/eye co-ordination when they build walls with bricks, stir and pour sand and water in a wheel barrow and mix glitter to make patterns in shaving foam.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The nursery has highly effective and secure measures in place, ensuring that risks to children's safety, both indoors and outdoors are minimised such as clear procedures for the safe arrival and departure of children to and from the nursery and visitors on arrival are informed of the fire procedure in the event of an incident. Formal risk assessments are effective in ensuring that potential hazards to children are minimised, for example, safety gates are securely fixed and appropriately used, door hinges are protected with safety guards, security buzzer is working, broken toys and resources are removed from play areas, fire exits are clearly labelled and are in working order and fire extinguishers are in place and securely fixed to the wall. There are comprehensive and clearly written procedures in place that staff know about and are consistently applied. Play areas, furniture, equipment and resources are effectively organised enabling children to move freely and independently between activities and different play areas. As a result, children feel confident within the nursery and are safe and secure.

All the group rooms and communal areas are brightly decorated with the children's art work, posters, notice boards, hanging decorative mobiles and photographs. The premises are exceptionally clean, airy, well lit, and effectively heated, ensuring that it is suitable for children to use at all times. Resources provided in each room are substantially well-organised so they are attractive and accessible to all children. Babies and very young children have toys set out on the floor on large trays that they can sit in and soft play mats and tables. They are easily accessible for them to reach by crawling, rolling and pulling themselves up. Older children are able to use low drawers and shelves to choose toys and resources as well as the range of activities that are set out each day by staff. Children enthusiastically select their own play resources which are appropriate for their ages and stages of development. Play equipment is stored at child height, promoting independence and self selection. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through gentle reminders from staff such as tidying away toys and walking indoors and running in the garden. Fire drills take place every three months. Regular visits from the fire brigade and police officers promote discussions about fire safety and 'stranger danger'.

Children are effectively and extensively protected as staff have an excellent understanding of child protection procedures and how to keep children safe. Policies and procedures are in place reflecting current practices with regard to the Local safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). A named person is responsible for safeguarding children and they have an excellent understanding of their role and procedures to follow if they have a concern. Parents are informed of the nursery's responsibility regarding child protection reassuring parents of their child's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop extremely close, trusting relationships with each other, and the adults in the setting, promoting their confidence and self esteem and giving them a real sense of belonging. All the children are very happy, contented and settled within the nursery, as they are cared for and taught by extremely motivated and enthusiastic staff. This helps children to become fully

engaged in the activities they are completing, for example during play with shaving foam staff sit with children and successfully support and extend children's imagination. Children are provided with an extensive range of inspiring activities and play opportunities such as growing vegetables and fruit on an allotment, making and baking play dough, sticking and gluing collages and experimenting with musical instruments. The babies particularly enjoy playing with mirrors and sitting in soft cushions. Consequently, children are extensively and consistently stimulated by activities provided and their interest is successfully maintained.

Children's developmental progress is tracked by the successful key person system that is in place and by using the 'Birth to three matters' framework. This, combined with the exceptional knowledge of individual children's developmental stages helps them to plan and deliver activities which help children to learn and develop in line with their age and ability. At outdoor playtime the children are given opportunities to freely explore the environment whether they choose to run and climb or to help with gardening projects. There are also more structured activities such as sewing, baking, and clay modelling that further enhance the setting. Adult led activities such as puppet shows, story telling and circle time provide a wonderful balance to the children's play. Staff take time to play with individual children and join in enthusiastically with activities, extending children's knowledge and helping them to enjoy expressing themselves creatively.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. The pre-school children are cared for by staff with an excellent, extensive and inspirational understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children play and learn. This helps to ensure that children make outstanding progress through the stepping stones and in line with their age and individual abilities and interests. Children and parents are involved in the planning of activities enabling staff to accurately assess children's developmental progress and plan future activities for children. Staff use children's individual profiles to track children's developmental progress, including initial profiles of baseline assessment, helping staff to successfully track children's progress across the stepping stones. Children take part in an extensive range of activities which cover all six areas of learning. The combination of free flow play, child initiated activities and adult led activities such as story and circle time enable children to work and play purposefully together and respond positively to staff requests such as tidy up time, story time and lunch time.

The children choose to read books alone or alongside their friends and listen intently to stories and rhymes. Circle time incorporates singing and musical instruments, the children avidly join in and recognise the familiar songs and rhymes. Children confidently talk about their families and experiences, initiate conversations such as "I've been to Lego land, have you been to Lego land?" and contribute at group times. Older children are encouraged to write their own names using jolly phonics system. Children have many opportunities to make marks that have meaning, for example, when they make labels for wall displays and the majority of them recognise their names on coat pegs, water bottles and place mats.

Children experience a real sense of community as the nursery provides many opportunities for children to absorb the rich diversity in the world around them. For example, they thoroughly enjoy colouring Rangoli patterns for Diwali, singing and playing instruments to African music and dancing with an Indian dance troop. Role play equipment and dressing up clothes support children in developing communication skills and promote imaginative play as well as helping them to learn about different cultures and countries around the world. The children have written to nurseries around the world. They send a teddy bear in a befeater costume, photos and a booklet with information about the nursery and life in England. Responses have been received

from South Africa and Australia and the children take part in circle time discussions to compare their nursery lifestyles.

Practical and interesting mathematical processes, such as measuring the distance required between vegetables, weighing and measuring ingredients when cooking and counting the number of children together at snack time to ensure the correct number of plates are available. Children respond eagerly when staff praise and encourage children for counting successfully to ten during a game of hopscotch. They particularly enjoy cooking, sand and water activities and learning about weight, size and capacity.

Children have exceptional opportunities to explore objects which help them to learn about the natural world through topic work such as life cycles of caterpillars and South African snails and finding out about mini beasts. They are also encouraged to grow their own vegetables and cress seeds. Children learn about their local community through inviting visitors into the nursery such as the fire brigade, police officers, the vicar and trips out, for example, the local park and theatre. Children can freely access musical instruments in order to learn about making different sounds, staff encourage this, helping children to identify and play simple patterns and rhythms in music. Children have free access to an extensive and imaginative range of creative materials such as shaving foam, porridge oats, shredded wheat, pasta and corn flour. They can also paint and draw at any time, allowing them to develop ideas and practice fine motor skills. Their physical skills are effectively promoted through an extensive variety of equipment, for example, climbing frame, balls, hoops, bicycles and tricycles. They are enthusiastic and particularly enjoy music and movement songs, for example, 'sleeping bunnies' where they jump up and down when they wake up and hop.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children learn to play in a culturally rich environment that positively reflects diversity, for example, posters and signs in other languages. They take part in activities which reflect the diversity of the society in which they live. Children learn about different celebrations, for example, Eid, Diwali, Hanukah, Harvest and they are able to access resources which reflect diversity, including, toys, dressing up clothes, play people, books, puzzles, musical instruments, food and posters. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities take part fully in all nursery activities. They are exceptionally well supported by staff who have a positive approach to meeting their needs. A special educational needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) works with parents and outside agencies to always ensure that all children develop confidence and make good progress.

Children behave extremely well. The extremely calm and patient approach implemented by the staff team helps the children to clearly understand right from wrong and the consequences of their actions. Full explanations are given to children as staff have high expectations and set consistent boundaries for the three to five year olds, which helps them to learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Staff provide excellent role models for children by being calm and polite. Praise is consistently given, ensuring that they develop confidence and self esteem and understand that they have done well. Children receive superstar certificates for their positive behaviour. Each certificate has five areas of achievement, for example, caring and sharing and being polite. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents complete a very comprehensive form on entry that details all the children's likes, dislikes, their habits, allergies, childhood illness's, achievements and family history. This enables the staff to have a full understanding of the children and their individual personalities. Parents are exceedingly well informed. There is a teddy bear for each group room, to support links between home and nursery. Children take bear home and parents take photos of him at parties, eating meals and on holiday with them. Older children share their stories of time with bear during circle time with their group. The excellent quality of displays including lots of positive images of the children helps parents and children to feel welcomed into the nursery. The welcoming environment helps new children to settle quickly and enables parents to talk to staff about any concerns they may have. Parents also receive monthly newsletters and notes which keep them up to date with events and activities their children will be participating in. Weekly plans are displayed and regular open days contribute to strong partnerships with parents. Partnerships with parents and carers of children who receive Nursery education is outstanding. Parents contribute to the initial assessment to establish their child's starting points and have open access to their children's folders and receive annual reports detailing their children's progress. They are informed about the Foundation Stage curriculum at enrolment and parents evenings, and are invited to view their child's profiles monthly to add comments and discuss their progress along the stepping stones whenever they wish. Excellent notices on the information board, displays around the nursery and in the individual group rooms informs parents about the Foundation Stage curriculum and the 'Birth to three matters framework'. Consequently, parents are extensively informed about the education, care and welfare of their child.

Parents are involved in nursery events such as 'Red Nose Day', 'Children in Need', summer barbeques and Christmas ball and raffles. Parents are aware of how to make complaints about the setting and these are dealt with in a prompt and professional way. Staff listen to parents' concerns and, where appropriate, adapt their policies and procedures accordingly. A fully comprehensive complaints policy is in place and all complaints are logged in a confidential file.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by the exceptional organisation of the nursery. Staff are consistent in their interactions with children and in their regard for safety and security. The extensive range of policies and procedures ensure children's safety and well-being is paramount. All documentation including details relating to staff and children are comprehensive and are obtained, recorded and stored appropriately, ensuring confidentiality is maintained at all times. Strong leadership by a highly qualified manager ensures that the provision strives to provide a consistently high quality of education and care.

Children are cared for by staff who have been checked through the Criminal Records Bureau and who have undergone a thorough and robust recruitment and induction programme. This ensures that all staff working in the nursery are suitable and have relevant training and experience.

The use of available space within the nursery is successfully and imaginatively well-organised, with clear areas for storage, play, food preparation, changing, eating and sleeping. These areas are well managed by staff to allow children to play, eat and rest safely and securely.

The leadership and management of nursery education is outstanding. The curriculum is introduced to the children through an integrated approach that helps them to continually develop their skills and work towards the early learning goals through their own first hand

experiences. Small group sizes ensure that ratios are met at all times. The manager, deputy managers and staff are all professional, enthusiastic and highly motivated in their approach to providing all the children with positive early years play and learning experiences. The registered provider/manager has a very hands on approach, a reflective and consultative practice is promoted within the nursery ensuring an open working practice is maintained. For example, the manager discussed future developments for the nursery to extend their exceptional practice further. She addressed ways to improve privacy for nappy changes and extending the soft play building to add a sensory and dance area. Staff are fully supported by the manager and excellent communication systems are in place to ensure continuity of care. Regular staff meetings ensure that the care and education children receive is regularly discussed and improved, with all staff members having the opportunity to contribute ideas and suggestions. Overall, children make outstanding progress in their learning and have excellent levels of achievement given their capabilities and starting points and the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The nursery have made significant improvements in line with the issues raised at the last inspection.

At the previous inspection, the nursery was asked to conduct a comprehensive risk assessment on the premises identifying actions to be taken to minimize identified risks. The provider has implemented formal risk assessments as an effective way to ensure that potential hazards to children are minimised, for example, safety gates are securely fixed and appropriately used, door hinges are protected with safety guards, security buzzer is working, broken toys and resources are removed by staff from play areas, fire exits are clearly labelled and are in working order and fire extinguishers are in place and securely fixed to the wall. There are comprehensive and clearly written procedures in place that staff know about and are consistently applied. These include procedures for addressing hot water, outdoor play areas, manual handling, security of the building, electricity and glucagon meter testing. As a result, children feel confident within the nursery and are safe and secure.

The nursery were also asked develop staff's knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities issues and ensure all accidents and medication is recorded and kept confidential. The provider has an excellent equal opportunities policy and accident and medication policy in place and this is reflected in practice. Staff provide children with opportunities to play in a culturally rich environment that positively reflects diversity, for example, posters and signs in other languages. Staff have attended training which has equipped them with the knowledge to provide activities for the children to take part in that reflect the diversity of the society in which they live. Children learn about different celebrations, for example, Eid, Diwali, Hanukah, Harvest and they are able to access resources which reflect diversity, including, toys, dressing up clothes, play people, books, puzzles, musical instruments, food and posters. This ensures children are well supported and staff provide a positive approach to meeting their needs.

Children are cared for by staff who are first aid trained and excellent procedures are in place to support children who require prescribed medication. Staff record accidents on individual sheets to maintain confidentiality. Each sheet is signed by a member of staff who dealt with accident, manager and parent. Accident sheets are filed in children's record files and kept in a lockable filing cabinet in the manager's office. This ensures that children's health requirements are met and confidentiality is maintained.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted have received one complaint on 5th September 2007 in relation to National Standard 5: Equipment, National Standard 6: Safety and National Standard 7: Health.

Ofsted undertook an unannounced visit on 10th September 2007 and found no evidence that the National Standards were not being maintained. Therefore Ofsted took no further action and the provider remained qualified for registration.

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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