

arranged to cater for the different areas of learning although some areas are not especially well presented or resourced. Overall, children use a fair range of appropriately maintained resources which are suitable for their age group although some items are a little tatty and old.

Good security and fire safety precautions contribute to children's overall safety. The premises remain locked and staff control access. Children and staff regularly practise fire drills to develop their awareness of the procedure they should follow in the event of it being necessary to evacuate the premises. Risk assessments and daily safety checks are undertaken. Staff supervise children carefully; they intervene to stop potentially unsafe practices although they are not always consistent in monitoring and addressing some safety issues such as the clearing up of spilt water to avoid the possibility of children slipping.

Children are safeguarded because staff have a secure understanding of issues relating to child protection. They have access to relevant documentation about child protection to guide them in the procedure they should follow if they have any concerns about children in their care. Parents receive a copy of the child protection policy statement and have to sign a statement to the effect that they understand staff have a responsibility to report any concerns they have.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and enjoy themselves at this nursery. Most enter well; they separate easily from their parents and quickly become engaged in their own choice of activity. They interact positively with one another and with the adults looking after them, who are kind and caring. Consequently children form trusting relationships with staff.

Children in the toddler group enjoy exploring the different activities arranged to be accessible to them. They sit on the floor playing with the dolls house and find out how to make the water wheels move with the help of a member of staff. Children take part in a daily focused activity, for instance junk modelling. They are provided with their own pot of glue and a variety of boxes and other materials. Staff sit alongside them and encourage conversation. They recognise that some children have a short attention span and respect their decision as to when they have had enough of this activity and allow them to get down from the table when they wish. Children join in with the daily singing session; they use musical instruments and are encouraged to do actions to accompany some songs. Staff sit with children, supporting their play. The nursery makes use of the Birth to three framework of good practice when planning and tracking children's progress.

Pre-school sessions are planned to enable children to learn through play and to make their own decisions about what they do from resources they can access themselves. However, the range of resources available to them is not extensive and some areas of the room are not especially well presented to be inviting to children and encourage them to spend time here. For example, the book corner and craft table. Sometimes staff do not make sure that there is sufficient sand in the sand tray or enough water in the water tray and children are confined to one pot of paint at each easel. On some occasions, resources that staff set out on tables remain the same for the duration of the session. Children greatly enjoy being outside and staff use the outside play area as an extension of the learning environment by taking different resources and activities outside which enables children to experience things in different ways. For instance, the musical instruments are available for children to explore freely when they are outdoors.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff plan activities that link to different areas of learning and consider in their planning how activities can be adapted for children of differing abilities. However, this does not always happen in practice and a sampling of records show that it is often the same children who take part in adult directed activities all the time. The pre-school session generally flows well although the period after snack time is less well organised and results in children milling around whilst they wait for direction or resources to be set out. All children have a key worker and they spend a short time each session in their key worker group, perhaps having a story or taking part in a specific activity. Staff respond positively to children's interests and spend time talking to them, asking questions and seeking their input. However, they do not always use these times as a springboard to extend them further in their learning. For example, children delight in looking for insects in the garden. They excitedly announce that they have found spiders and look intently at these but they are not extended further. The system used for monitoring children's progress and achievements has recently been changed and staff are developing their use of this. Children's records do not currently show the next steps in their learning and it is not clear how the information gathered through observation is used to inform future planning.

Children enjoy themselves and have fun. They form good relationships with others and are encouraged to be independent and attend to their own needs. For example, as they pour out their own drinks and put on dressing up clothes. Children are familiar with the daily routine, calling out to one another when it is tidy up time. They enjoy being chosen to bang the cymbals together, which denotes that they need to help tidy things away. They are keen to share their experiences and gain awareness of the passage of time as they talk about the things they have done at home or will be doing. Children self-register on arrival at nursery each morning although their name cards are not used at any other time during the session to reinforce name recognition. Staff provide few opportunities for children to link sounds and letters. Children explore mark marking and some children write their names on their work. However, a lack of writing materials in the role play area limits opportunities for them to practise writing for a variety of purposes. Some children count confidently, for example the number of pasta pieces they have threaded onto a piece of string and as they play 'What's the time Mr. Wolf.' Some children join in with number rhymes such as 'ten green bottles' but these do not always have meaning to some children. Staff do not exploit the many opportunities that arise as part of the daily routine to encourage children to consolidate their use of number and develop their problem solving skills.

Children's physical skills are developing well. They move freely indoors and outside, with good spatial awareness as they run around, changing direction and avoiding collisions. Some children are becoming quite adventurous in their exploration of the fixed play equipment outdoors. They use their hands and a range of different tools as they play with playdough and develop their hand/eye co-ordination and manipulative skills as they thread pasta shapes to make necklaces and make patterns as they fit different coloured pegs into pegboards. Children enjoy using scissors to snip lengths of wool into small pieces. They build and construct, for example as they make up railway tracks and build tall towers of bricks. Children use the computer with support and have access to other resources that enable them to explore technology although not all of these have working batteries.

Children enjoy singing and playing musical instruments. They use their senses as they play with shaving foam, squeezing it through their fingers and describing the way it feels. They enjoy dressing up and acting out stories. Children have some opportunities to express their ideas through free creativity although a lot of the artwork on display is adult directed.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The nursery operates an open door policy and welcomes parents into the group at any time to discuss any concerns they have, ask questions or to chat with the manager or their child's key worker. Parents receive information about the group in a variety of ways; for example through policies and procedures, newsletters and information displayed on noticeboards throughout the setting. Staff seek relevant information from parents so they can meet children's individual needs. The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Information about the Foundation Stage curriculum is available and plans are displayed for parents to view if they wish. Parents are invited to spend time with their child's key worker to discuss their achievements although they do not formally contribute to the progress records staff keep on them. Parents speak positively about the nursery and the staff caring for their children, whom they find friendly and approachable.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff treat children with equal concern. They are greeted warmly on arrival and staff offer cuddles to those younger children who arrive a little unsettled. The range of resources reflecting positive images to enable children to develop their awareness of the wider world in which we live is currently not extensive although additional items have been ordered. A number of Nepalese children attend the nursery and staff make some use of labelling in Nepalese. Nepalese books are available although they are not always easily accessible by the children themselves. Children benefit from the presence of a Nepalese speaking member of staff who is present on some days of the week as she is able to translate as necessary. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive appropriate support as the setting works in partnership with parents and outside agencies to promote their individual needs. Individual plans are devised and one to one support provided where necessary.

Children behave well. They are aware of what is expected of them and receive good levels of support. Children's confidence and self-esteem is well fostered because staff praise and encourage them. Praise is meaningful because staff make a point of explaining what it is they have done and thus, children are helped to feel proud of themselves and their achievements. Several members of staff have attended behaviour management training and the whole staff team speak to children in a calm, gentle tone of voice.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. A new committee has recently been appointed and arrangements are in hand for Ofsted to be informed of the new members in order that required checks can be undertaken. Appropriate procedures are in place for recruitment and vetting to ensure staff working with children are suitable to do so. There can be a continuous turnover of staff and children at this setting because of its military connections and this can present some challenges; for example in respect of the number of qualified staff employed. Currently, however all staff working at the nursery either hold or are working towards relevant early years qualifications. The importance of ongoing training is recognised and valued by everyone and staff take advantage of the opportunities available for professional development.

Staff work together as a team and show awareness of their roles and responsibilities. This helps to ensure that children feel secure and at ease both with their carers and in the environment. Deployment of staff is generally effective overall. At this point in time, there are some areas for development and improvement, in particular with regard to the resources children have to

use and those areas of the nursery that require attention. Everyone displays a positive attitude towards rectifying these issues and a desire to improve the quality of care and education for all children attending the setting. There are some systems in place to monitor existing practice and the provision of nursery education although these are not sufficiently well developed in all respects.

Detailed policies and procedures relating to all aspects of the provision are in place and required documentation is maintained. Records are stored securely and confidentiality is respected.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Areas for attention identified at the setting's last care inspection related to developing staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures, providing healthy and nutritious snacks and giving children opportunities to select activities. Good progress has been made in addressing the first two recommendations. The importance of attending child protection training is recognised and all staff have either attended this or are due to do so. Children are supported in developing a positive attitude towards healthy eating through the provision of different types of fruit at snack time. The measures taken in addressing these issues contribute in positive ways to the overall health and safety of children attending the setting. Some progress has been made in respect of the final recommendation. Children can help themselves to resources that are arranged to aid their independent selection and they participate in a variety of activities. The range of resources available is not however extensive and staff do not take advantage of all opportunities to extend children's learning.

Key issues identified at the group's last nursery education inspection related to providing opportunities for children to use books for information at everyday activities, to develop opportunities for children to explore the natural world and to enable them to bring in items from home to support topics. The nursery was also asked to review the way staff manage music sessions, the way they observe children's behaviour and to increase opportunities for children to freely access craft resources to support their play and to select tools and materials in adult led craft to develop their imagination and creativity. Some of these issues have been addressed whilst others continue to be work in progress. For instance, children now have access to a craft table where they can explore free creativity and express their own ideas although the range of materials available to them is not extensive. Within adult led craft activities children enjoy an element of choice in terms of the different resources they use, for example glitter and different coloured tissue paper to create sea mammals. Music sessions are managed well and staff notice and respond appropriately to children's behaviour. Children show interest in the insects they find in the garden and have found out about the life cycle of butterflies through first observations. Different animals have recently been brought into the group to support a topic about animals. Children have had opportunities in the past to bring in items from home to support topic work although this practice has lapsed. Children sometimes have opportunities to look at information books as part of the activity they are taking part in, such as looking at pictures of different sea creatures before attempting to draw their own sea creature using a computer drawing program.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 01 April 2004 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT 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):

- improve monitoring arrangements to ensure the cleanliness of all areas and resources used by children
- ensure greater consistency in dealing with potential safety hazards
- improve the presentation of some areas of the pre-school room and children's access to resources.

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):

- use observations of children and their achievements and progress to inform planning and ensure the provision of activities that reflect the individual needs and abilities of the children attending
- provide greater opportunities for children to link sounds and letters and to explore writing for a variety of purposes
- provide more opportunities for children to explore mathematics and develop their problem solving skills as part of the daily routine
- provide opportunities for parents to contribute to their children's records of achievements and are aware of the next steps in their learning
- develop further monitoring procedures to ensure consistency of good practice in the delivery of nursery education at all times.

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