

Meadows Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101601
Inspection date	28 February 2008
Inspector	Bridgette Williams
Setting Address	Windrush, Little Shurdington, Shurdington, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL51 4TX
Telephone number	01242 862040
E-mail	WWW.Meadows Day Nursery.co.uk
Registered person	Meadows Day Nursery
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?

Meadows Day Nursery is privately owned and operates from the ground floor of a large, detached house in the Shurdington area of Cheltenham. The nursery opened in 1996 and serves the families from nearby towns and villages.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 08.00 until 17.50, closing only for public holidays. It is registered to care for 48 children from birth to five years at any one time. There are currently 72 children on roll, 28 of whom receive funding for nursery education.

Children are cared for in four separate age groups, each with their own playroom. There is a large, enclosed garden which incorporates an adventure playground, hard surfacing for wheeled toys and a large grassed area.

A team of 18 staff work in the nursery, eight of whom hold a Level 3 National Vocational Qualification in Childcare and Education or equivalent. Another five staff hold Level 2 childcare qualifications. In addition, the nursery employs a manager, who is National Nursery Examination Board qualified, a cook and a secretary. A high percentage of staff have attended first aid and child protection training. The pre-school group is supported by the local authority Early Years

Advisor and the Special Educational Needs Coordinator. The nursery is a member of the Parent and Toddler Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

There are daily opportunities for vigorous play and development of large muscles skills as children run, climb, and steer their bikes around the bike track. Children enjoy playing in the extensive gardens. During less favourable weather, they benefit from outside play suites, which allow them to have daily fresh air. This promotes a good, healthy lifestyle.

Effective policies are in place to prevent the spread of infection, for example, all visitors to the baby room are asked to wear shoe covers. Children who are infectious do not attend the setting, preventing the spread of contagious ailments. From an early age, children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through effective daily routines. They understand that they need to wash their hands to avoid passing germs onto others. Parents provide prior written consent to administer medication, which ensures that children receive the correct dosage according to their needs. Accidents are recorded and shared with parents and carers, which contributes towards their continuity of care.

Effective procedures are in place for children who have allergies. Nutritious meals prepared at the setting help children develop good eating habits. Children are developing an awareness of what foods are good for them as they state 'carrots make you big and strong!' Babies enjoy being cradled when fed their bottles and happily eat their solids in a high chair.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff organise the indoor space effectively, allowing children to move around freely and independently. Children use a wide range of good quality toys and resources appropriate to their age and stage of development. The garden is divided effectively into different areas to allow all the children to play outside safely at the same time. There is a huge range of outdoor equipment for the children to use, offering challenges that are appropriate for children at different stages of development.

Children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe as they practise fire evacuation procedures. Staff carry out regular risk assessments in each room and outside to minimise hazards. This contributes towards children's safety. However, not all potential risks have been identified, such as children wearing socks on a slippery floor. Staff supervise children closely when playing outdoors. The area is fully enclosed and secured with bolted gates. Outdoor play equipment is regularly checked to ensure it is suitable for children's use.

Children sleep according to their needs and parental wishes. Some children sleep in prams. Staff regularly check the babies who sleep in the cot room, where sleep monitors are used. Toddlers sleep after their dinner. A member of staff stays with the children while they rest.

Staff are aware of child protection policies and understand the procedures to follow if they have any concerns. Staff receive clear information regarding the signs and symptoms of abuse. This supports children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy themselves at the nursery. Staff create a warm, loving environment where the children feel safe and secure to explore new and exciting activities. Staff are very aware and sensitive to children's individual needs. For example, not all children enjoy the loud noises of the musical instruments but are happy to watch from afar. Staff support the children until they are sufficiently confident to join in. Consequently, the children flourish and feel highly valued. Children have wonderful opportunities to explore a range of sensory activities, such as playing with rice, play dough, water and mashed potato. They are very eager to participate in the activities planned and become truly involved in the experiences. Staff are very skilful at interacting with the children, maximising opportunities to develop children's spoken language and to extend incidental learning opportunities.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from staff having a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn. The learning environment is bright and stimulating. The indoor area is organised according to the different aspects of the curriculum. For example, there is a sensory area, a dressing up corner, a book corner, a computer station and a craft area. The outside area provides a wealth of opportunities to develop all areas of the curriculum. There is a woodland area, easily accessible from the pre-school room, where the children independently explore and investigate their surroundings. The children have a real sense of ownership of this area. They have created a wide range of shakers, all hung on the fence, which they play with. They have their own compost area, where they recycle their vegetable and fruit peelings, and a box of resources in which they collect precious stones. Children blow bubbles, watching them fly through the sky, and use a range of chalks and paintbrushes to decorate the wooden fence, experimenting to see how they can mix water and chalks to create different colours.

Written plans are linked to the six areas of learning and indicate what children are expected to learn from the activities planned. Each child has a progress file, where work is kept and dated to record individual development. Staff are mostly aware of children's next stage of learning. However, observations of individual children's progress are not fully utilized to inform future planning.

Children talk confidently to their friends and staff. They all listen intently as other children display the objects that they have brought in for their show-and-tell session. Children are beginning to understand that words convey meaning. Objects around the room, such as the television and mirrors, are clearly labelled, and many children are beginning to recognise their name on their name cards. Children are becoming aware of the concept of simple addition and subtraction. They can say what is one more or one less than. This knowledge is applied at the sand and water play area, as they are aware that only three children are allowed to play there at any one time. For example, children ask 'there are only two at the sand, please may I go and play there?' Children demonstrate excellent cutting and joining skills. They select and use appropriate materials and tools from the craft trolley to create collages and models. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is very good and resources and activities encourage them to explore and investigate. They take it in daily turns to assess what the weather conditions are like, as they look at the weather from their specific viewing area, and report back to their friends what they need to record on their weather chart. Children are confident in using information and communication technology, demonstrating good mouse control when playing

games on the computer. Children enjoy music and respond enthusiastically during music sessions. They experiment with sound and enjoy beating out rhythms on different instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are very polite. They enjoy each others' company and treat each other kindly. They thrive on the praise and encouragement which all staff offer, providing a positive caring and learning atmosphere throughout the nursery. Children play harmoniously alongside each other. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff complete a day book for parents, which provides information about children's daily activities, food intake and sleep. Parents are made extremely welcome at the nursery and enjoy spontaneous opportunities to stay and play with their children. Consequently, parents feel valued in their contribution to their children's development, and report that staff are very approachable and supportive in caring for their children. These positive links with parents ensure good continuity of care for the children.

There is a complaints policy in place, although some of the contact details are out of date. A poster with telephone details of the regulator is displayed clearly.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are kept informed about forthcoming topics through discussion and posters on the notice boards. Parents actively contribute towards the topics by encouraging their children to take items in for show-and-tell sessions, by providing photographs for projects, and, in the case of some parents, by providing talks for the children, in which they share their knowledge about different cultures and experiences. There are regular informal daily discussions with parents about the activities that their children have been involved in while at the nursery, but parents are not actively involved in contributing towards their child's next steps of learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Policies and procedures are in place and are implemented effectively, although some contain out of date information. Children benefit from qualified and experienced staff who are caring and provide a well organised environment for children to feel secure and confident. Staff continually evaluate the childcare and learning experiences they are providing for their children. This reflects the staff's dedication to improving the quality of care and education they provide at the setting. Staff deployment is effective and ensures children are well supervised at all times. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the setting are good. Staff work very well as a team. They understand their role and responsibility and, actively encouraged by management, are committed to attending further childcare training and development courses. They regularly hold meetings to discuss planning and cascade any information they have received from courses to capitalise on the knowledge they have gained. Consequently, all staff remain well informed, which ensures that there is continual improvement in the outcomes for children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the setting agreed to: ensure that activities for the two- to three-year-olds were appropriate to their age and ability; to have drinking water readily available; to ensure that a record of visitors to the nursery was maintained; and to request written permission for emergency medical treatment.

The setting now provides a good range of activities for children aged two to three, that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Pre-school children confidently help themselves to their own drinks, which encourages them to think about their own personal needs. However, there is still scope for improvement in the accessibility of drinking water for the younger children at the nursery. A record of visitors is kept and the setting seek written permission for emergency medical treatment.

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.

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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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that children wear appropriate footwear indoors to minimise the risk of slipping
- ensure policies are regularly updated

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):

- demonstrate how observations inform planning for the children's next steps of learning
- devise systems to inform parents of children's next steps of learning

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