

Ravensdale Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127497
Inspection date	03 July 2007
Inspector	Stephanie Graves

Setting Address	Ravensdale Day Care Centre, Sandhurst Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 3ND
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Registered person	Barnardo's
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?

Ravensdale Day Care Centre is run by Barnardo's and opened in 1993. The setting operates from six main rooms in a purpose-built building, in Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Other areas of the centre include a parent's room, a speech therapy room, offices and a staff room. A maximum of 24 children may attend the setting at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09.30 to 15.45 during term times and a play scheme operates during the school holidays. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 43 children aged from two to under eight years on roll. Of these, 15 children receive funding for nursery education. The centre caters for children with profound and complex special needs and currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The High/Scope approach is used within the nursery and the setting works alongside other professionals, including family support workers, health visitors, speech and language therapists, schools and other nurseries.

The nursery employs 24 members of staff. All staff working with children in the nursery hold appropriate early years qualifications and over half the staff working in the play scheme also

hold relevant qualifications. All staff are trained in caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are actively involved in experiences which help to develop their knowledge and understanding of health and hygiene issues. For example, they are encouraged wherever possible to be independent with routine self help tasks, including toilet visits and washing their own hands. Low level amenities help to promote accessibility. Staff discuss practices with children and can be heard asking if their hands are 'wet or dry', and singing 'wash our dirty hands' which helps to reinforce their understanding. Children benefit from effective hygiene procedures adopted throughout the setting. For instance, staff use antibacterial solutions to ensure surfaces are hygienically clean and follow clear procedures when tending to children's personal care needs. This helps to prevent the risk of cross infection. Children's good health is promoted through clear measures to ensure they are well cared for should they have an accident or require any treatment or medication. This helps to ensure proper care and follow-up is implemented. Children have plenty of opportunities to take part in physical activity and are provided with comfortable areas in which they can rest. As a result, their physical skills and sense of wellbeing are promoted.

Children learn about healthy living through the nursery education curriculum. For example, they are provided with opportunities, which help to promote their physical development. They learn about the functions of different body parts, including bones, as they move to action songs. They are able to be energetic as they climb, balance and slide on large apparatus and access a range of tools and resources which help to stimulate and develop their fine manipulative skills.

Children are provided with plenty of drinks to help keep them hydrated. They bring packed lunches from home and, wherever possible, are encouraged to make healthy choices regarding the food they eat. Staff provide a variety of snacks, including fruit and yoghurt. They sit with children at meal times and involve them in discussions. They ask children what they would like to eat or drink and children are not afraid to ask for what they want. Individual dietary needs are respected because staff and parents work together to ensure the needs of the children are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are able to play and learn within safe boundaries. This is because staff ensure they have enough space to move around and freely access the experiences available. Toys and resources are checked frequently to ensure they are safe and suitable for the children attending and the necessary facilities are in place to ensure safe access and inclusion. This includes soft surfaces around outdoor play apparatus and safety matting around indoor climbing equipment. An effective risk assessment covers all areas of the provision and helps to identify and reduce the risk of accident or injury to children. Written consents help to keep children safe at all times and include permission for sun protection and outings. Children themselves are developing a good awareness of how to help keep themselves and others safe, because staff offer very good explanations. For example, they learn to move carefully during whole group music and movement

activities to avoid bumping into others and staff explain that they may fall and hurt themselves as they jump on a role play bed. They happily agree to play on a mini trampoline with a hand rail as an alternative. This effective input helps children develop an awareness of personal safety.

Children's welfare and safety is promoted well within the setting. For instance, regular emergency evacuations are practised with the children and recorded. Staff have a sound understanding of issues regarding safeguarding children, recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what to do in the event of a concern. Training is updated regularly and the group recognises the vulnerability of the children they care for. This knowledge and understanding contributes towards ensuring children's welfare and safety remains a priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children receive a warm welcome from dedicated staff and the setting is stimulating and appealing. This helps children to feel secure and form close relationships with the staff team. Children can access a very good range of toys, resources and experiences which help to promote all areas of learning and development. These include role play equipment, art and craft, playing with sand, water and malleable materials, construction and physical play. These all help children to develop and learn as they play. Staff understand the needs of the children attending and include them when planning and providing for their individual needs. Principles of the Birth to three matters framework are used and anecdotal records chart children's progress. Younger children are included in all the activities and experiences provided. They receive good staff support and plenty of opportunities to explore and investigate. For instance, they can access many sensory experiences and a range of interactive toys which stimulate all the senses.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are progressing through the stepping stones towards early learning goals. Their learning and achievements are good in relation to their starting points and individual capabilities. This is because staff observe and assess their progress from when they join the setting with 'my child at home' parental involvement sheets, through to completing transfer documents when they leave the group. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and implement the principles well. Planning is well documented between staff and parents, which helps to maintain consistency for the children and ensure their individual learning needs are met. The next steps needed in children's learning are used to inform individual plans and regular evaluations help to ensure the activities provided are appropriate. Teaching methods are very effective in gaining and maintaining children's interest and the use of a picture exchange communication system, teaches children to initiate interaction and make choices. Picture cues are also used in whole group activities, such as, music and movement. These help children to understand and follow simple instructions and what is going to happen next.

Children are developing confidence and the ability to play cooperatively with others. They are encouraged to persevere and complete tasks, such as, crawling through a play tunnel and demonstrate a sense of achievement when staff praise them for completing the task. This helps to reinforce their sense of self-esteem. They are becoming independent learners as they choose their own activities and follow routines, such as, snack time. They learn to share and take turns because staff encourage this during activities, such as, water play, as they talk about filling containers in turn. Children talk about their favourite activities, which currently include, playing

'on the trampoline' and 'cutting up' role play vegetables. A variety of tools are available for children to make marks, although these are not always readily available and means they are unable to access these in a range of different play situations. They have ongoing opportunities to explore books, stories, musical instruments and tapes in attractively arranged areas and enjoy opportunities to communicate with others. Children are gaining confidence with numbers and counting and staff encourage this during routine activities. Signs and print around the setting help to reinforce number recognition. Children learn about shape and measure, for instance, through puzzles, shape sorters and good staff explanations, including describing how measuring spoons are used to measure food ingredients. Children are developing a sense of time as they follow routines and recall what they have been doing during each session.

Children learn about themselves and others, for instance, through the use of a birthday chart and social opportunities as they greet one another at the start of the day. They have ongoing opportunities to explore natural resources, including bark, cones, leaves, coconut shells and pictures of animals and insects. This helps them to learn about living things. They demonstrate curiosity as they explore the changing colours of lights in the sensory room, or try to push play dough through a plastic press. There are many opportunities for children to developing their hand eye co-ordination. The use of programmable toys, such as, tape machines, a toy laptop or malleable materials helps to develop these skills. Use of the outdoor area, in all weathers, promotes children's developing physical skills. Children enjoy music and movement activities, singing along to familiar songs and moving in different ways as they stamp their feet, clap their hands, jump and roll. They enjoy exploring sound through musical instruments and quickly attempt to imitate adult input. Role play opportunities encourage them to be creative as they represent real life scenarios through their play. Staff ask many effective questions to help children think and respond. For example, as they 'bake cakes' or cook 'toast in the toaster' they ask how the food is going to be cooked and how long it needs before it is ready. This helps children make connections and link their ideas as they play.

Overall, the provision plans and provides a very good range of activities, experiences and play opportunities, to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities on an individual basis.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into the nursery and are cared for according to their individual needs. All are treated with equal respect and concern. They are not afraid to seek support from staff who are fully attentive. For example, they ask questions, including 'is this my chair?' during a music and movement activity and adult responses help to reassure and include them. Young children who take time to settle are regularly acknowledged and affirmed by staff who skilfully direct them towards favourite activities to help them feel secure. Children learn about the similarities and differences between themselves and others through toys, resources and environmental images, which promote positive images of diversity. Children with disabilities and learning difficulties are very well supported by staff who know them well and work in partnership with parents and other agencies. This helps to ensure their specific needs are met. Behaviour management strategies promote children's welfare at all times. Staff manage behaviour according to children's different ages and stages of development. They are good role models who reinforce good behaviour and praise children frequently for individual achievement. This helps to promote their confidence and self-esteem. Children receive consistency of care because staff and parents work closely together to support their needs. The provider takes positive steps to ensure that parents are kept well informed about all relevant

policies and procedures, although the written statement regarding special needs does not contain sufficient detail. However, a comprehensive range of informative literature for parents is readily available and includes detailed information regarding disabilities and learning difficulties.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents of children in receipt of funding for nursery education feel included, involved and informed about their children's progress. They attend regular consultations and contribute towards planning and reviews. Information is made available containing clear aims relating to the early learning goals. Parents are invited into the nursery to spend time with the children and greatly value the dedication and support of the staff team. The partnership results in a consistent approach towards meeting children's learning and development needs.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are fascinated by a wide range of sensory experiences and enjoy investigating and exploring through the activities and experiences provided. A variety of stimulating play opportunities and teaching strategies help to develop their social and communication skills and children learn to share and take turns as they play. They are provided with opportunities to greet one another and communicate their ideas and interests, which helps them develop a sense of belonging.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a very caring, safe and well organised environment. They demonstrate good relationships with the staff and enjoy the range of play and learning experiences on offer. Rigorous systems are in place to ensure the adults working with children are suitable and staff training needs are addressed regularly. Although, the statement relating to special needs requires improvement, all the necessary information and records are shared with parents. Daily attendance records are up to date for children, staff and visitors, although arrival and departure times are not easily accessible, which could make it difficult to account for every child efficiently in event of an evacuation. Children's welfare, care and learning are well promoted, due to the policies and procedures in place, which help to underpin the group's professional practice.

The leadership and management is good. Staff apply the Foundation Stage well and clear aims are in place for the personal development and achievements of all children. Planning covers all areas of the nursery education curriculum and parents are involved in planning learning opportunities and activities for their children. Staff are dedicated to the needs of the children and combine care and nursery education effectively. This promotes good outcomes in all areas of children's play and development. The provision of equipment, toys and resources is very good and children are progressing well according to individual ability. Teaching and learning is monitored and the overall effectiveness of the curriculum is evaluated well. The setting works closely with other professionals and has very close links with other groups and schools. This helps to provide appropriate support for children as they move between settings.

The group is very committed towards the ongoing improvement of the provision. This is evident in regular self-evaluation exercises to ensure children are receiving the best possible care and opportunities to play, learn and develop. The nursery has been awarded accreditation and provides a professional service. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the group received two recommendations. The first was to ensure children are protected from the adverse effects of the sun when playing outdoors and the second was to review policies and procedures and make these available to parents. Both recommendations have been addressed. There is a clear policy in place to safeguard children from the effects of the sun and policies and procedures have been updated and are available to parents.

At the last inspection of nursery education, one point for consideration was raised. This was to extend written plans to show clearer links with the stepping stones. Improvements have been made. The system for planning includes the early learning goals and different aspects of learning to be covered.

The provider has taken steps towards improving the service provided and ensuring children are safe and well cared for at all times.

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):

- develop systems to demonstrate how daily attendance records for children and staff will be used effectively in an emergency
- develop the statement for children with special needs to ensure it contains sufficient and relevant detail and is made available to parents.

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):

- provide opportunities for children to experience mark making during every day activities.

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