

Oaklands (Tonbridge) Ltd.

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY277977
Inspection date	04 October 2007
Inspector	Stephanie Graves
Setting Address	8 Brook Street, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 2PJ
Telephone number	01732 353486
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Registered person	Oaklands (Tonbridge) 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?

Oaklands Day Nursery opened in 1990 and operates from six rooms in a converted detached house in Tonbridge Kent. A maximum of 60 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.45 to 18.15 throughout the year. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 92 children aged from four months to under five years on roll. Of these, 31 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area and surrounding towns. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 18 members of staff. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are actively involved in experiences which help them to learn about health and hygiene issues. For example, older children are encouraged to be independent with self help routines, including toilet visits and wiping their noses. Toilet facilities are low level and help to promote easy access. Children learn about good hygiene during activities. For instance, they understand why they must wash their hands before a food activity and learn to look away if they cough 'to make sure germs don't go in the ice cream.' Babies and the very young children attending benefit from effective hygiene routines used by staff when changing nappies and bed linen or preparing feeds. This helps to prevent cross infection. Surfaces are cleaned with appropriate solutions and all feeding equipment is sterilised appropriately. Children are well cared for if they have an accident or require any first aid treatment. Whilst prior written parental consent to administer medication has been sought on most occasions, there are a few instances when this has not been recorded, which could result in children not receiving appropriate follow up. Children enjoy plenty of physical activity and are provided with comfortable areas and sleep routines for rest and sleep. This helps to ensure their wellbeing is considered effectively.

Children enjoy a variety of activities through the nursery education curriculum where they learn about good health. For instance, they can access a range of toys and resources that help to promote their fine manipulative skills and the outdoor area is utilized well. Children can run, climb, balance and play with the parachute, bounce on space hoppers or pretend to be 'hot' or 'frozen' jelly beans as they exercise together. They learn about how their bodies work through well planned activities, including exploring at a full size illustration of the body and then contribute their own ideas. They know that teeth need 'calcium' to make them strong and that hearts 'pump blood' around the body. They know that legs and feet are needed to 'walk' and 'stamp' and count how many toes they have on each foot. Staff make learning fun, which motivates children's interest and involvement.

Children's dietary needs are well promoted through rotated menus that encourage a good variety of nutritional options. They enjoy the food provided, which includes favourites such as 'fish, potato and peas.' They are provided with a variety of meat, rice and pasta dishes and plenty of fresh produce. Appropriate foods are pureed for babies being weaned onto more solid meals. All children have access to drinks at all times and many can help themselves when they are thirsty to keep them hydrated. A clean food award helps to ensure food is properly prepared and served. Children's dietary requirements are met through clear agreements between the nursery and parents. Children learn about healthy eating through growing their own fruit and vegetables to make ice cream and soup and staff explain that eating well will give them energy. This encourages children to be actively involved in preparing and eating healthy options.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The safety of the children attending the nursery is considered well, which means they can play and learn within safe boundaries. Staff ensure they have enough unobstructed space to freely move around and access the toys and resources available. These are checked frequently to ensure they are safe and suitable for the children attending. The necessary facilities are in place to ensure the safe access of activities, including soft surfacing around outdoor play apparatus. This helps to promote children's safety and independence whilst using climbing apparatus. A

risk assessment and daily checks help to identify and reduce risks of accidental injury to children. Staff ensure mobile babies and the very young children cannot access any unsuitable areas, including the stairs, through effective use of safety barriers and good supervision. Children understand how to help keep themselves and others safe through meaningful activities and good staff explanations. For example, younger children learn how to use the stairs safely to avoid falling and older children learn about concepts, such as road safety, through visits by police officers. They understand that all children need to be marked into the register 'in case there's a fire.' and have opportunities to practise the emergency evacuation procedure regularly. This effective input helps children develop a very good awareness of personal safety.

Children's welfare is promoted well within the nursery because staff have a sound understanding of issues regarding safeguarding children. They understand the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what to do in the event of a concern. Training has been attended by key staff and information shared with the staff team. The procedures are based on current requirements and help to ensure children's welfare and safety comes first.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed by dedicated staff into a warm, welcoming and stimulating environment. This helps children to settle quickly, feel secure and form close relationships with the staff team. Children can access a very good range of toys, resources and activities that promote all areas of learning and development. These include art and craft, role play opportunities, malleable materials, construction, games, books and physical play. Staff understand the needs of the children and allow them to play and develop at their own rate. The Birth to three matters framework is used for babies and children under three years of age and observations are used to chart developmental progress. This age group receive good support and plenty of stimulating activities to help promote their learning. For example, some enjoy building with blocks or dressing dolls, while others play with interactive toys that they can manipulate and explore using all the senses. They enjoy outings and spending time in the outdoor area, although this opportunity is not promoted to its fullest potential. The current timetable means that babies and young children use the outdoor area for a period in the afternoon and as a result they do not always enjoy the full benefits of more regular time in the garden. Children's creations are beautifully displayed which helps them develop a sense of pride in their achievements. They enjoy stories and books and even very young children turn the pages appropriately and listen to staff as they talk about the pictures inside. Background music help to contribute towards the homely feel and younger children confidently select musical instruments and play along to familiar songs. They benefit from being able to play and learn in a relaxed but well planned environment.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are moving forward in their learning, 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 through to completing transfer documents when they leave the group to go to school. Staff have a good working knowledge of the Foundation Stage and implement the areas of learning well. Planning is documented effectively and the next steps needed in children's learning are used to inform planning. However, these are not always recorded consistently, which means there are some gaps in children's records. Regular evaluations help to ensure the activities provided are successful.

Children benefit from good teaching methods, which are very effective in maintaining their interest and as a result they remain focussed and involved in the activities provided.

Children move around and select their own activities. They are provided with many exciting challenges and persist at completing tasks, such as, tidying away. They demonstrate a sense of pleasure when staff praise them for completing tasks, which helps to promote their confidence. Many children are becoming independent learners as they naturally follow routines. They are well behaved and play amicably together. They share their ideas and talk about their favourite activities, which currently include, cooking, playing with trains and play dough. Staff ask very effective questions to promote responses and extend children's learning. They learn about diversity through well planned activities. For example, various festivals and cultures are included in planning and children enjoy visits from people who help them to understand about disability and learning through using the senses. A variety of tools are available for children to make marks in various situations, such as role play, and they have ongoing opportunities to enjoy books and listen to stories read with good expression by staff.

Children explore initial sounds, such as 'p' for 'play' as staff teach them to press the play button on a tape recorder. They learn to recognise simple words and write their own names. They are developing confidence with numbers and counting and staff encourage this during routine activities such as setting out beakers at meal times. Environmental print around the nursery helps to reinforce number recognition and pre-reading skills. Children are developing a sense of time as they follow the nursery routine and know when it is time to tidy away or get ready for lunch. They have opportunities to learn about shape and measure, for instance, through puzzles and computer games and when measuring out food ingredients.

Children have ongoing opportunities to explore natural resources in a well designed natural outdoor area. They identify bugs and insects and grow their own flowers, fruit and vegetables. This helps them to learn about living things and the natural world. They explore the concept of making boot prints on paper using autumn coloured paints and listen to the sound of fallen leaves as they tread on them. Activities help children to develop their hand eye co-ordination. For instance, some can use the mouse well as they follow simple instructions on the computer, while others competently use a whisk during a cooking activity. Children enjoy physical activity and taking part in action songs, often in various languages. They dance to music where they learn to move in different ways.

Role play opportunities encourage children's creativity as they represent real life scenarios through their play. For example, planned role play is cast aside to make way for children's own ideas, such as making a role play travel agents. This helps them to develop their own ideas and staff imaginatively provide resources including travel brochures, tickets, cameras and a map of the world to extend children's learning. The use of a voice recorder encourages them to 'interview' one another and ask where they would like to go on holiday. Replies include 'the jungle.' These opportunities help children make connections and link their ideas as they play.

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

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children receive a warm welcome into the nursery and are cared for according to their individual needs. They are treated with equal concern, which helps them develop a sense of belonging

and self assurance. Babies and very young children are regularly acknowledged and affirmed by staff to help them feel secure. Children learn about the differences between themselves and others through the toys, resources and activities, which promote positive images of diversity. Children speaking English as an additional language are well supported to ensure they feel included and valued. Behaviour management techniques promote children's welfare at all times. Staff are good role models who reinforce good behaviour and praise children regularly to promote their confidence and self-esteem. Children in return are polite and respectful towards the staff and one another. They actively help to make a positive contribution to the setting and the environment. For example, they take part in charity events to help those less fortunate than themselves and have campaigned for recycling containers for the nursery to recycle many items used within the setting. This helps them develop an early understanding of environmental issues. They receive consistency of care because staff and parents work closely together to ensure their needs are addressed. The provider takes positive steps to ensure that parents are kept well informed about all relevant policies and procedures. Parents and carers feel included and informed and value the stimulating, homely environment. As a result children benefit from effective support between home and the nursery.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents of children receiving funding for nursery education, feel involved and informed about their children's progress. They attend regular open events and consultations and can contribute towards their children's development records. Planning is displayed and information is made available regarding the early learning goals. Parents are updated daily on what the children have been doing and are invited to continue with some themes at home. They are invited into the nursery to spend time with the children to share their individual skills and knowledge. They speak highly of the provision and this two way support results in a consistent approach towards meeting children's learning and development needs.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They show a sense of wonder as they explore and investigate, for instance, when playing in the outdoor area or when observing the changing texture of home made ice cream. They learn to share and take turns and as a result enjoy cooperative play with others. Children's social skills are promoted through a variety of stimulating play opportunities and teaching strategies. They are provided with many opportunities to share their home news and favourite interests as they play and learn together.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, homely and very well organised environment. They demonstrate good relationships with the staff team and can freely access a good range of play and learning experiences. Systems are in place to ensure the adults working with children are suitable to do so and staff training needs are addressed regularly. The registration certificate is clearly displayed and although improvement is needed regarding the medication procedure, the necessary records are all in place and shared with parents. These include daily attendance records for the children, staff and any visitors. Children's welfare, care and learning are promoted well, due to the variety of policies and procedures, which help to underpin the group's professional practice.

The leadership and management is good. Staff apply the Foundation Stage well and the group has clear aims for the personal development and achievements of all children. Planning covers all areas of the curriculum. Although further improvement is required to the methods used for observation, assessment and recording the next steps in learning, children are progressing well.

Staff are dedicated to the needs of the children and integrate the care and nursery education well, which helps to promote effective outcomes in all areas of child development. The provision of equipment, toys and resources is very good and teaching and learning is monitored and evaluated frequently. The setting enjoys close links with local primary schools, which helps to prepare children for moving on to school life.

The group is very committed towards the ongoing improvement of the nursery. This is well demonstrated through regular reflective practice and self-evaluation exercises. The group also seeks advice and support from other professionals to ensure children receive the best possible care and education. The pre-school 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 five recommendations. These included ensuring procedures for sleeping babies were improved, developing staff knowledge of child protection issues and ensuring that procedures reflect current requirements. Improvements were also required in relation to making sure equipment meets the needs of the children and providing an appropriate range of toys and activities to promote positive images of diversity. The recommendations have been addressed. Sleeping babies are checked regularly and times recorded, staff knowledge of procedures to safeguard children has improved, equipment meets the needs of the children attending and the toys and activities provided include many positive images of diversity.

At the last inspection of nursery education, three key issues were raised for improvement. These included reviewing the systems for planning and assessment, improving the storage of toys and resources to enable children to have free access and to review the opportunities for physical play. The key issues have been addressed. Planning and assessment ensures all the areas of learning are covered, although a further recommendation has been left to continue to further develop the systems for observation, assessment and recording the next steps needed in learning. Children enjoy many opportunities to be active and take part in a range of energetic outdoor activities.

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):

- ensure the prior written consent to administer medication is recorded consistently
- develop systems to encourage more flexibility regarding the use of the outdoor play area for babies and the very young children.

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):

- continue to develop systems for observation, assessment and identifying the next steps needed in children's learning to show clear progression.

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