

Play House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	139945
Inspection date	06 July 2007
Inspector	Lindsay Ann Farenden
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Registered person	Royal Marsden NHS Trust
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?

Play House Day Nursery is owned and managed by the Royal Marsden NHS Trust. It operates from a purpose-built two-storey building within the grounds of the Royal Marsden Hospital. A maximum of 42 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:45 to 17:45 for 52 weeks of the year excluding Bank Holidays. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 50 children aged from six months to five years on roll. Of these 18 receive funding for nursery education. The nursery provides a service for hospital staff and children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are a total of 15 staff including the acting manager and deputy manager. All staff hold early years qualifications with some staff working towards a NVQ level 3 qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children thrive because staff carry out good practices to meet children's physical and health needs. For example, they wear gloves and aprons to serve food and during nappy changing procedures. To prevent the spread of infection children play in a clean environment and staff clean tables with anti-bacterial spray before meals and after messy activities. Children gain a good understanding of personal hygiene through practical routines, such as washing their hands thoroughly with liquid soap after using the toilet and before meals. Children's sleep needs are met very well as they sleep on individual mats and cots and bed linen is washed on a regular basis. Children are comforted as they go to sleep by staff gently patting their backs and letting them cuddle their favourite toy or comforter from home. For children's safety a member of staff is always present in the room whilst they are sleeping.

Parents are given a copy of the menus and these are also displayed for them to view. Special dietary needs, such as those relating to religion, allergies and parents' preferences are respected and catered for. Children are currently provided with chilled meals, which are heated appropriately. Meals and snacks provide children with a balanced diet and include vegetables and fruit. This helps children to develop healthy eating habits from a young age. Older children learn about healthy foods, as they peel and cut vegetables to make soup, as part of a planned activity. Meals times are sociable occasions, where children and staff members sit together. Babies are encouraged to feed themselves with finger foods and are bottle fed in the comfort of staff's arms. Drinking water is available for babies and children at all times, preventing them from getting thirsty or dehydrated.

First aid boxes are well stocked and most staff hold a first aid certificate, which means they are equipped to treat minor injuries. The clear recording of accidents and the sharing of these records with parents enables them to watch for any further symptoms which may occur. The written sickness policy informs parents that when children are unwell they must not attend. This prevents the spread of contagious ailments. Parents give prior written consent to administer medication which ensures children receive the correct dosage according to their needs.

Children enjoy many opportunities to take part in physical play both in the nursery garden and on outings to parks and activity centres, which contribute to a healthy lifestyle. This develops their large muscle skills and helps them to move their bodies in a variety of ways. They run around a drawn out track in the garden and older children manoeuvre wheeled toys with confidence, showing a good awareness of space. Children benefit from regular fresh air and exercise, as they walk to parks and are taken on exciting walks in the woods. Babies are also taken for walks to the park or play in the garden each day. Older children's hand and eye co-ordination is developing well, as they are competent when using small equipment, such as glue sticks, paint brushes, writing materials and joining construction resources together. Three and four-year-olds are making good progress towards the early learning goal for physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises offer children a bright, welcoming child-orientated environment. Children's risk to accidental injury is minimised because staff are vigilant and use risk assessments to reduce

potential hazards. Children are kept safe in the nursery by staff that ensure a good level of security is maintained. For example, there is a video intercom system with TV screens in the main play rooms and office, which ensures parents and visitors are identified before gaining access to the nursery. The identification of any visitors to the nursery is checked and they sign in and out of the premises, so staff know who is present at all times. The high staff ratios and the good deployment of staff means children are well supervised at all times. To minimise risks to children when on outings, staff follow appropriate procedures and undertake prior visits to places of interest they intend to take children to ensure they are safe. Children learn about keeping themselves safe, as police officers visit the nursery and talk to the children about road safety and stranger danger.

Children's well-being is safeguarded by staff in accordance with the detailed child protection policy. Staff have attended child protection training and are aware of discussing any concerns with the manager. Procedures are in place if a child protection allegation is made against a member of staff.

Fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms are in place. Children and staff become familiar with the procedures to follow in the event of a fire because these are regularly practised. Fire exits are kept clear which supports this progress.

Children have access to a good range of toys and resources which are safe, of good quality and developmentally appropriate. Most are stored at the children's level, so they are able to make independent choices of what they want to play with. Furniture and equipment is age appropriate and encourages children's development. For example, children have access to a sufficient number of child size tables and chairs which allow them to play and eat in groups. Carpeted areas and soft furnishing allows babies to crawl and learn to walk without hurting themselves.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies are given very good support due to the high staff to baby ratios. They receive lots of warmth and affection from staff, who spend time playing with them. This supports their emotional well-being and gives them confidence to explore new experiences. Babies and children thoroughly enjoy music sessions, as they use musical instruments and join in action songs with staff. Babies enjoy exploring wooden objects in a treasure basket and discovering the texture of cornflour. Young children walk around and climb on appropriate child size play equipment.

Staff provide good opportunities for children to develop their creativity and their senses through a very wide range of activities, such as painting in various ways, rolling and moulding play dough, playing with cooked pasta, sand, water and cooking activities. Children enjoy painting their hands and feet to make prints on paper, laughing and giggling as they do this and having a fantastic time. Staff use opportunities during this time to help children learn their colours, by asking questions and talking to them about the different colours and prints they made. Children enthusiastically dig in sand and fill containers with sand and water, often mixing them together discovering the change of texture and learning about weight and volume. Children enjoy doing puzzles and gain from the help staff give them to match and join pieces together. They enjoy looking at pictures in books and having stories read to them.

Children are secure in their relationships with staff, who give them lots of help and assistance, to encourage them to think and extend their play. They initiate their own play as they confidently select the resources they want to play with, which have been set out for them. There are

effective systems to observe, monitor and records children's achievements, although children's next step of development is not fully linked to the planning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good with some very good aspects, particularly in relation to language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world. Staff have an excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning and effectively plan a varied and exciting curriculum to encourage children's development in all areas. Staff use past nursery information on each child's development and they assess each child's skills for a month when they first move into the pre-school room. They then use this information as a starting point, to help children to continue to achieve. They are very aware of children's individual progress through observations and recording their achievements and use these to plan children's next step of learning. Children are captivated and inspired by the wide range of stimulating and meaningful activities and experiences provided, which ensures children are fully challenged in their learning.

Children relish being at the nursery and are very keen to talk about their experiences there. For example, they enthusiastically explain how they made a dinosaur cave and discuss with each other the size of dinosaur skeletons they made with clay. They talk enthusiastically about how they run and ride bikes around the drawn out track in the garden and use the outdoor equipment.

Staff give children lots of individual attention to encourage good behaviour. They use positive language to encourage children's enjoyment and to take pride in their achievements. This encourages children to persevere with activities and practise skills. Children are developing good self help skills, as they pour their own drinks and put on and take off painting aprons. Children use dressing up clothes and to help them prepare for school, they dress up in school uniforms. This also helps them to learn dressing skills. They are encouraged to take turns with popular resources, such as the painting easel and computers. Children take part in tidying up and enjoy being involved in laying the tables and handing out the cups for lunch. They are encouraged to make independent choices from the resources which are stored at their level.

Children are very keen to draw and practise their writing skills in the well resourced writing area. Some children's drawings and paintings are very well developed, as they are able to produce clear pictures of people and houses. They use their wide vocabulary and imaginations to describe their pictures to staff. Children aged three and four years are able to use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters. Staff actively encourage children to write their names on their own work. More able children are able to link the sounds of letters in their names very confidently. They easily find their name cards at the meal tables and there is good labelling of storage boxes within the room. This means that children learn to understand that print has meaning.

Staff provide excellent opportunities for children to gain skills in communication and technology. Children demonstrate very good mouse control when using learning programmes on the computers. They confidently print pictures and their own work from the computer. They then often choose to colour in pictures, letters and numbers they have printed.

Children enjoy counting and clearly understand numbers that are important to them, such as their age. They are able to recognise numbers and count in sequence up to 14. Many children are able to do simple addition and subtraction. For example, they are able to say what is less or more using their fingers and some more able children know without having to count. They

learn to use money in real life situations, as they visit the shops to buy goods. Children enjoy a wide range of activities to develop their understanding of shape, measurement, weighing and sorting. They confidently use mathematical language, such as 'longer', 'higher', 'bigger', 'taller', as they create towers and rows using various construction materials.

Children use their imaginations well to design and create independently, although the role play area does not always provide children with opportunities to act out real and imaginary experiences. They create and paint their own three dimensional models made from recyclable materials. They mix paints together and some children can recall the combinations of paints that caused the colour change. Children experiment with simple science as they watch the changes of ingredients during cooking activities.

Children have good opportunities to learn about caring for living things. They went to the pet shop to choose a budgie and cage for it and enjoy feeding the budgie and giant snail. They examine insects they have found in the garden with magnifying glasses. Children learn about different outside environments as they play exciting games, such as going on a bear hunt in the woods.

Children have good opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them, through well planned activities relating to religious festivals and events, visitors to the nursery and outings. They have visited a Chinese supermarket and play with Chinese dishes, as part of role play.

Children like playing with different musical instruments, which develops their enjoyment of sound and rhythm. They sing action songs with gusto and have a wide variety of songs. They take an interest in books as they look at them in the comfortable book area. Children are fully engaged in story time, due to staff's use of effective questioning about pictures and text, which helps children to remain focused and extends their vocabulary.

Staff plan very meaningful, fun and exciting outings for children which are on a themed basis, to enable children to gain a greater understanding of the topic area. For example, as part of the transport topic children travelled on a train to a bus station and especially enjoyed having a picnic on the bus. Children showed great interest in the topic on dinosaurs and thoroughly enjoyed their visit to Natural History Museum, which then extended their knowledge of nature and evolution.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel valued, as staff are aware of their individual needs and take time to support these. Staff are able to discuss individual personalities and needs, which demonstrates they know children well. Children with English as an additional language are well supported in the setting, with staff using signing to help communication with them. Children develop a positive attitude about others and diversity through a good range of play resources and books, which are integrated into everyday play. They learn about religious festivals and events that may be different from their own through well planned meaningful activities and displays.

Children are polite and learn good behaviour through staff who present as positive role models. They use constant praise and award children with stickers for their efforts and achievements, contributing to children's high levels of confidence and self esteem. Staff manage children with

challenging behaviour extremely well, as they work closely with parents and outside agencies to devise strategies and written behaviour plans to support the child and deal with the behaviour.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcomed into the nursery. The designated special educational needs worker has attended training in this area. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to assess and meet children's needs. When appropriate each child has a written individual education plan to help them meet targets and make progress. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social, cultural and development very well.

The partnership with parents is good, which contributes significantly to the children's well-being in the nursery. Staff actively seek information both verbal and written from parents about babies' and children's needs, toys they prefer to play with, interests and skills. They then use this information to help children to settle and support them in their developmental progress. Parents are given a booklet about the day nursery, which includes the policies and procedures. This also contains the complaints procedure. Photos and notice boards keep parents well informed of activities that take place during the child's day at the nursery. Parents receive progress reports on their child every six months, which are of a high standard giving good information on their child's achievements and their future learning targets.

Parents whose children receive funding for early years are provided with good information on the Foundation Stage and the six early learning goals and how these are met. Parents receive regular newsletters which include information about the topics taking place and details of how children's learning can be extended at home. The feedback from parents indicates that they think the nursery is excellent. Comments include, 'children very much enjoy the outings they are taken on'; 'children learn to write their name and know their numbers' and 'staff are friendly, communicative and very approachable'.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff enhance children's care with effective organisation. The majority of staff have worked at the nursery for many years, which provides good consistency of care to children. High staff levels are consistently maintained and are organised across the rooms, ensuring children are well supervised and given good support and encouragement. The key worker system ensures that staff know children's initial needs and are able to identify and plan their next step of learning. All staff are qualified and regularly attend training to update and refresh their knowledge and skills.

Policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare, health and safety of the children. All legally required records and documentation are well maintained and there are good systems in place to share written information with parents.

The recruitment system and checking procedures demonstrate that suitable staff care for children. There are regular opportunities for the staff team to meet together to share ideas and suggestions for planning and to discuss any issues affecting the nursery. They regularly reflect, monitor and improve the quality of care and education as part of an accredited quality assurance scheme.

Leadership and management is good. The manager is a good role model and ensures the leader of the pre-school room has an excellent awareness of the Foundation Stage curriculum, through

attending regular training. This ensures children's learning is fully enhanced and they make good progress in all six areas of learning. The manager is aware of the strengths of the group and uses self evaluation forms to look at practices and development within the nursery. For example, plans are in place to develop a sensory area in the garden. The manager monitors teaching and the impact of children's learning, through regularly observing practice and an effective appraisal system. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection two recommendations were made. Since the last inspection more resources reflecting positive images of disability have been obtained. This further develops children's awareness of diversity. Drinking water is now easily available to children in each room.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 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 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 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):

- continue to develop planning so children's individual next step of learning is linked to the planning

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):

- extend role play area, so children have further opportunities to act out real and imaginary experiences

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