

Dowry House Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	309291
Inspection date	20 September 2007
Inspector	Ann Bamford
Setting Address	St. Marys Road, Bamber Bridge, Preston, Lancashire, PR5 6TE
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Registered person	Irene Wilson
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional 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?

Dowry House Nursery was opened in July 1990. It operates from a Victorian property at the junction of Browndedge Lane and St Mary's Road in Bamber Bridge, close to the town centre.

The nursery consists of a main playroom, quiet room, kitchen, office and bathroom. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area and a balcony area at first floor level.

There are 34 children on roll, aged two to five years. This includes 27 children in receipt of the nursery education funding. Children attend for morning and afternoon sessions and full time places are available. The setting supports children who have learning difficulties and disabilities. There are children attending who have English as a second language.

There are five staff qualified in early years. All the staff are first aid trained. The facility is open from 08.00 until 17.30, closing for bank holidays and Christmas. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is protected because they are cared for in premises that are generally clean. Policies and procedures are in place to keep the environment clean. However the arrangements for cleaning and the layout of some toy equipment and resources adjacent to the toilet area do not consistently protect children from risk of cross infection.

Some children are developing skills in managing their own hygiene needs, however, at times older children are left to use toilet facilities without adult support. This impedes consolidation of routine skills, such as flushing the toilet washing hands or blowing noses thoroughly after use.

Staff have a very good awareness of identifying children who are developing symptoms of being ill and contact parents promptly to take children home. Children's skin is protected from sunburn as staff implement the nursery's policy on providing all children with sun protection supplied from home. Medication is administered in line with parents' requests. Children are nourished effectively. They have regular meals which take account of their individual likes and needs. Children eat a variety of fruit and have access to drinks. Children rest and sleep in line with their individual needs as one whole room is used to encourage children to have a rest or sleep in the middle of the day

Children are developing good gross motor skills as a result of having freedom of movement. They have good access to the outdoors through creative use of a balcony for activities and frequent use of a large well ordered and resourced outdoor play area. This enhances their development of climbing, pedalling and balancing skills. Children are developing threading and manipulative skills as they thread on cards and collaborate when using equipment, such as scissors and crayons, taking turns with desired colours.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept generally safe in the setting. There are well-used procedures in place to ensure that this remains so. For example, children are kept entirely safe in the outdoor play area as the staff check it for hazards every time before children go outside. Staff in the setting are knowledgeable about reducing risks. They improve children's safety by moving trip hazards and tidying away unused toys and equipment during the day. Staff hold a good knowledge of how to select age appropriate equipment and do so with care. However some of the equipment is very old and although staff do check it regularly to ensure that it remains safe, the fabric of items, such as the home corner, is starting to deteriorate.

Children are developing an enhanced understanding of keeping themselves and others safe in the event of a fire because they take part in regular fire drills. The regular practice of the emergency plan raises children's confidence in protecting each other. Children's continued safety is maintained as staff are vigilant in implementing the setting's policy on who collects children.

Children are very well protected by staff's embedded knowledge and understanding of their role in safeguarding children. This is enhanced further by all members of staff's strong knowledge

of the procedure and confidence to act in the event of a concern about a child, including where there is an allegation about a member of staff or volunteer.

Children's safety in the setting is afforded by the use of a well implemented recruitment and selection policy. There are checks undertaken on staff to ensure suitability to work with children and that adults hold appropriate knowledge and training to care effectively.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have access to a wide resources and activities which promote their development. Children are cared for in a way which encourages them to be confident, independent and develop good levels of self-esteem. Staff caring for the younger children know them well and act effectively to meet their individual needs.

Children become competent learners as staff join them in activities and encourage them to persist with completing a picture. Children are engaged in activity throughout their time spent in the nursery and are able to choose the toys and equipment for themselves as equipment is stored in rooms in a way which is easily accessed by children.

All children are developing an awareness of what is right and wrong as staff gently explain how another child may feel when conflict arises. Apologies are encouraged from one child to another. Children enjoy time spent playing together with staff. Staff listen to and challenge them to take the next step, such as trying to form the letters of their name or name a variety of colours

The setting uses frameworks, such as the 'Birth to three matters' and the Foundation Stage curriculum to plan what children will be doing. Staff usually make observations on what children can do and have begun to use these to plan the next steps for the group of children. However, a recent change in the planning and recording of next steps has led to inconsistencies in the planning for individual children and this impedes the recording of some children's progress,

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and make observations on what children can do. More experienced staff are active in ensuring that newer staff understand what is expected of them. They plan a range of activities for children which assist development towards achieving the early learning goals.

Staff plan the environment to allow children constant access to areas of continuous play. This begins to assist teaching and children's learning as every indoor area is accessible and meaningful to children. For example, most equipment in the pre-school is stored at child height meaning children can choose equipment they want to play with. Children are developing friendships and are increasingly able to wait their turn in a shared activity, such as a game or jigsaw.

Children are becoming confident communicators and readily ask questions of visitors. Many are beginning to ascribe meaning to marks and listen to stories with interest and understanding. Children's mark making skills are developing well as they write their names with increasing confidence and can name and write individual letters. Their creativity is developing well as they design collages and produce pictures illustrating the story of 'the Gruffalo'. Children use imagination with assistance from an adult as they use sand in a variety of ways, initially for digging but developing it into earth and a means of building a house. Children join in songs at

circle time and many children know the full song. They choose the songs they like and relish, singing the bits they know more loudly.

Children are developing the concept of numbers as they join in songs at group time. They are able to count the number of objects in pictures correctly. They show increasing confidence with numbers as they independently count the number of meals ready on the table in their imaginative play. Children show natural curiosity and begin to use tools, such as scissors, for a purpose. They delight in showing visitors their recently completed sunflower pots and vegetables and can talk confidently about waiting for the light and water to make the seeds grow. Children go out regularly into the local area. They enjoy regular trips to the library and attend a skills development group at a local high school. This enhances their knowledge and understanding of the world around them

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the centre, they separate well from parents or carers. Children feel a sense of belonging as they point out their pictures and other work displayed to parents as they are being dropped off. New children settle well as staff are very skilled in encouraging them to join in activities whilst they are kept alongside a familiar adult. There are good systems for gathering detailed information about children's individual routines before they are admitted to the setting.

Children have access to a wide range of opportunities which encourages their understanding of diversity, for example, playing with multi-cultural dolls and clothes, books and jigsaws. There are many planned activities to celebrate festivals which are linked to both children's own customs and those of the wider community. Children are developing an excellent knowledge of the wider world as they learn to greet others in different languages and experiment with dressing up clothes such as a hijab provided to support a topic on Ramadan.

There is a robust policy for meeting additional needs. There is a clear system in place where need is assessed prior to admission and where needed additional training is undertaken. As a result, children who have additional learning needs or disabilities have them met effectively and their parents are part of the overall plan. Staff are confident to identify if children are having difficulties and speak to parents, allowing children's individual needs to be identified and met at an early stage.

Children behave very well. They are developing strategies for making friendships taking turns and settling disputes as staff are competent role models who talk about being kind to each other and feelings. Children are given individual support to succeed in situations that they find difficult, such as meal times. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are welcomed into the setting. There is written information that is offered to parents in a variety of ways. Information on how care and education is provided is of an acceptable standard and is given to parents in written form as well as by talking directly to them. In the pre-school parents are provided with information about the early learning goals and the child's record of achievement evidences their progress towards them. These records are shared with parents on request and are given to children at the end of their stay. Children in all areas of the setting take work home regularly.

There is a written policy and procedure for dealing with complaints. The manager and staff have devised a system for sharing information on complaints with parents should the need arise

Organisation

The organisation is good.

There are recruitment procedures in place to ensure that safe, suitable practitioners work with the children. The mainly qualified staff team make use of opportunities for training which develop children's care and learning. For example, staff have attended induction training and training in relation to the Foundation Stage curriculum, first aid and safeguarding children. Training is planned to ensure that any requiring updating, such as first aid, is done in a timely fashion. Staff are deployed according to their skills and experience. Records in the setting support safe care of children. They were all current and available for inspection. There are procedures in place for sharing records with parents.

The management team are developing roles and responsibilities whilst supporting staff and children through a period of change; the setting has recently undergone changes in staff. The setting has systems for managing issues to enhance opportunities for children, for example, changes to the time a local provider comes in to offer dancing is changed to facilitate new children attending the activity. A written plan is in place in the event of staff illness or emergency. Staff are supported using both formal staff meetings and appraisal meetings.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. The setting is starting to be able to assess its own strengths and weaknesses as staff have taken part in the completion of the setting's self-evaluation plan.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the setting ensures that staff knew the revised National Standards. Since that time the setting has reviewed how it meets the standards in staff meetings and introduced this into the induction course for new staff. This has improved the quality of care for children.

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):

- continue to develop strategies for ensuring children are not at risk of cross infection when using toys and that they learn to carry out simple hygiene practices with consistency
- continue to develop risk assessments to ensure equipment is safe and well-maintained at all times.

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 the system for planning children's next steps in development (this applies to care also).

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