

Early Days Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	310413
Inspection date	08 January 2008
Inspector	Frank William Kelly
Setting Address	6 Alexandra Road, Waterloo, Liverpool, Merseyside, L22 1RJ
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Registered person	Mr Malcom Russell & Mrs Clare Russell
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Early Days Day Nursery was registered in 1990 and is one of three settings operated by an organisation. It is based in a large detached property, which is situated in the Waterloo area of Liverpool.

A maximum of 44 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 32 children aged from seven months to three years on roll. Of these, three receive funding for nursery education. Children come mainly from the local area. The service operates from 08.00 to 18.00 each weekday, 51 weeks of the year. Children are cared for within four playrooms and there is an enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting employs nine staff; of these, eight hold appropriate childcare qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in premises that are very clean and well maintained. Staff ensure that playrooms are kept warm but suitably ventilated so that air stays fresh, yet ensures that less mobile children remain comfortable. During daily routines staff implement good hygiene practices to help prevent the risk of infection. For example, they wear disposable aprons and gloves when changing children and clean tables and surfaces before and after children eat.

Policies relating to the administration of medication have been revised and are now followed as required. Arrangements for recording and dealing with accidents are in place with several staff holding up-to-date first aid certificates, which further promotes the children's well-being. Policies regarding caring for sick and infectious children are held, although, staff are not fully familiar with the required times children should be excluded following bouts of vomiting or diarrhoea. Children are beginning to demonstrate an understanding of the routines which promote their personal hygiene. For example, they wash their hands before meals and snacks, and when encouraged, explain to visitors how they (the visitors), should rub their hands together with the soap.

Staff are attentive to babies and young children's needs as they spend time settling them when they are placed down to rest, talking to them when changing them and comforting them when they become fractious or upset. Information about children's individual sleeping and feeding routines are sought and followed, thus, providing the children with continuity which helps them feel secure.

Children enjoy regular opportunities for outdoor play where they can raise their heart rate, develop their large muscles and improve their motor skills. They do this as they chase each other around, play with balls, bats and hula hoops and climb, balance and slide on the large fixed activity station. Babies enjoy good space to crawl, stretch and toddle. Staff encourage them to investigate what is available to them by good organisation of toys and resources. This captures the children's interest and entices them to try to reach for them by their own efforts.

Systems are in place for sharing information about children's specific dietary needs. All staff including those who prepare the meals and snacks are aware of children's individual needs and any alternatives they need to provide. The menus served provide children with a good range of textures and tastes. Ingredients are mainly fresh and prepared on site each day. On the day of the inspection children enjoyed a freshly prepared dish of macaroni cheese with bacon, accompanied by broccoli spears. The meal was tasty and subtly flavoured which suited the young children's palates. Vegetables were cooked to retain their texture and flavour. The member of staff responsible for the preparation of the meals and snacks has a good understanding of the importance of monitoring the salt, fat and additive contents of any commercially processed foods served, such as sausages.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The recently refurbished and extended premises are nicely decorated, maintained and presented. Good use of children's art and creative work, toys and equipment makes the playrooms an inviting place for children to be. Children, parents and visitors are made to feel welcome by the

pleasant greetings from staff and information about the nursery, displays and notice boards are neatly presented throughout the setting.

Equipment is of a good quality and much of it is new or has been recently replaced. Changes to the storage facilities and general organisation of the playrooms means that children have very good access to what is available. The setting is aware of the need to further increase the range of resources and currently does this by using local services, such as the early years toy and local reference libraries to provide further variety for the children. Cots and very comfortable domestic furniture, such as chairs and sofas in the baby rooms provide the children with improved resting facilities and opportunities to enjoy homely interactions with adults on a one-to-one or small group basis.

Suitable safety arrangements are in place, such as socket covers being in place and doors fitted with guards to prevent fingers becoming trapped. Access to the premises is implemented well with staff checking identification documents and ensuring that accurate visitor's records are maintained. Access to the setting and some playrooms is further restricted by key pad security systems. Fire safety procedures are in place and practised with suitable frequency to help the children to learn about what to do in the event of an emergency. Daily risk assessments are completed by the senior members of staff at the start of each day and outdoor play area checks are implemented by staff before the children go outdoors to play. However, during day to day activities, staff do not always check that the fixing brackets on some of the heater guards are fully secured, or tightened up on a regular basis. Thus, when pulled some release on one side easily.

Staff help children to learn about keeping themselves safe as they provide gentle prompts and reminders. For example, they encourage children to concentrate on what they are doing whilst using the staircase or explain how they might fall and hurt themselves if they sit on the tables.

Children are safeguarded as there is a child protection policy with suitable information to enable staff to understand what they should do in the event of needing to report concerns. All staff are aware of their responsibilities to report concerns, however, the manager and other designated members of staff have not updated training in recent years.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are happy and contented during their time at nursery. Their good relationships with the staff mean that they are confident to express their needs and wishes. Younger children seek comfort and reassurance from staff when visitors enter the room. Staff are warm and loving in their interactions, which provide the children with confidence to continue with their play.

Children of all ages eagerly engage adults in their play; they enjoy the positive responses they receive from adults which boosts their self esteem. For example, a toddler announces that it is a cow. Staff praise her and ask her to make the noise that a cow makes; which she does with a loud 'moo'. The game continues with other animals and the child has much fun as she 'neighs and baa's'. Children are confident to express their wishes. For instance, a two-year-old calls the member of staff to ask if they can transfer water from the water tray to the sand tray. Staff support them and talk with them about how much they may need and how to ensure that they keep themselves and others safe by not spilling it. They enjoy using the damp sand to fill the tubs and build castles.

Staff are beginning to plan further activities for the week, which are linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They have begun to undertake observations of the children to help them plan activities and evaluate the children's development. The staff team have embraced suggested changes and have worked hard to create a more stimulating and interesting play environment by creating well defined, easily accessible resourced areas of play. Children enjoy their daily access to sand, water and other tactile activities, such as play dough, chalks, paints and other creative materials. They play happily with the small world figures, dress up in the role play and when encouraged will fit inset boards and simple jigsaws. Children's creativity is encouraged and two year olds spend long periods of time exploring the resources, making patterns with the brushes, using glue, glitter, sequins and card; painting their own hands and those of the staff. They proudly show their efforts to visitors and inform them that it is 'a special picture for mummy and daddy'.

Children in all rooms have access to books; they enjoy looking at the pictures on their own and with adults. They sing along with favourite songs. Toddlers stand in anticipation, with their hands ready to clap, whilst singing 'wind my bobbin up'.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The playrooms are organised to provide children with more choices and the key staff working with the children have a secure understanding how activities link to children's learning within the six areas of learning. The environment is stimulating with lots of low-level print, and numerals clearly visible.

Staff have begun to plan activities for the children which are linked to their observations of what the children are interested in and what they can do. They have begun to monitor children's progress using the local authorities plotting progress booklets. Staff support from the teacher team is helping staff's confidence and knowledge when planning the program of learning that reflects the Foundation Stage guidance.

Children continue to make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals as staff foster a warm and pleasant learning environment. Children have some encouragement to practise some independence skills, such as putting on their coats or dressing the dolls. However, during daily routines, opportunities to extend their skills are being missed as they do not serve themselves at lunch times or get frequent opportunities to pour their own drinks.

Children are chatty, confident individuals who all eagerly engage visitors in conversation. They excitedly call to adults in the room and provide a running commentary on what they are doing or listening to. For instance, when wearing the headphones the children call out the sounds of the animals making hooting noises for the owl and flapping their arms to emphasise their decision. They demonstrate a sense of time and self as they talk about recent events at their home. They talk about leaving carrots out for 'Rudolph' and helping to put the Christmas tree away.

There is a well resourced writing area for emergent writers, which includes a range of tools, paper and examples of written material to help children to understand that writing is used for a purpose. Children recognise their own name card on the cupboard door and some are beginning to use descriptive language to describe what they are talking about. For example, one child shows his picture of a sheep and announces that it is 'woolly sheep'. They use mathematical language to describe the size of their lunch as being huge and they count correctly how many

pieces of pasta they have on their fork. They count spontaneously one to seven and when encouraged recognise that there are three children at the table.

Children enjoy nicely resourced, free and planned craft activities. They draw and paint fish for their aquarium, make patterns and prints to display on the walls and draw, paint and use chalks whenever they wish to do so. Good adult led activities outdoors, enhance children's imaginative play. For example, they build a train from large cardboard boxes and use play tools to fix and build with.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The children's individual needs, circumstances and preferences are known and are suitably met by the staff. Children are respected as staff show interest in what they have to say and respond positively. There is an appointed member of staff in place who understands the steps to take to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities. Children learn about their local community through visits to local places of interest, such as the beach, shops and library. They are gaining an awareness of their wider world through stories about children from other lands and opportunities to play with utensils, such as chop sticks.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They respond well to the staff's requests, for example, to help tidy away their resources for snack or wait in line before using the stairs. Daily opportunities to talk in small groups are helping children to learn to listen and take turns. Consequently children are well behaved. This is further enhanced by the positive attitudes of the staff who speak calmly to the children and each other, providing the children with expected models of behaviour.

Overall, the partnership with parents is satisfactory. Children benefit from the familiar relationships staff have with parents. Staff share information verbally on a daily basis. Information about the setting is displayed within the main areas of the premises and a parental handbook for parents to take home includes brief information about the setting and how it operates.

Newsletters are sent out and displayed informing parents about forthcoming themes and nursery plans, such as the development of a log pile to encourage mini beasts. A few displays of photographs showing the children playing, accompanied with written explanations about what the children are learning from are in place and there is some information about home links included in the activity plans. However, there is insufficient information about the learning programs. At present, parents of children receiving nursery education receive little information about the Foundation Stage and how the different activities link to the six areas of learning and the children's development. Currently there are no regular opportunities created by the setting for sharing information about the children's progress in place.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

A suitable recruitment procedure has been devised, which includes checking staff qualifications and completing approved criminal records checks before allowing adults to work unaccompanied with the children. All records are appropriately maintained and required policies and procedures are in place. Staff have an induction and are regularly requested to read any updated policies

and procedures. However, at present there is no formal system in place for the managers to monitor staffs understanding of policies, training needs or any changes to their circumstances.

The recent considerable investment into the premises is having a positive effect and contributing to improving the overall outcomes for children's care, learning and well-being. Within the setting children have good freedom of movement within their playrooms and are able to make increasing choices about what and where they play with. This along with the caring and warm staff interactions promotes the children's sense of security and confidence.

The leadership and management regarding nursery education is satisfactory. They demonstrate a commitment to improving the nursery education and outcomes for children by seeking support and closely following advice from the local early years teacher team.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Care

At the last inspection, the quality of the care was judged as inadequate. The setting needed to improve the organisation and deployment of staff; the implementation of safety procedures including risk assessments; install and implement suitable fire safety procedures and ensure the consistency in which the medication administration policy and procedures are followed by staff.

The organisation have since taken action so that there is sufficient staff to ensure that children's care needs continue to be suitably met at all times of the day. Additional staff have been employed to help prepare meals and snacks and provide cover over statutory break periods, such as staff lunch breaks. Procedures relating to the administration of medication have been revised and staff now follow them consistently to promote children's health and well-being. Within the premises children's safety has been greatly improved as new fire safety equipment and detection systems have been installed. Staff check these as recommended by the fire officer and regular drills are undertaken.

Nursery education:

At the last inspection, one recommendation was made relating to how the staff used the Curriculum guidance document for the Foundation Stage, to help them plan and implement the quality of the nursery education. The setting needed to improve the staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum including planning and assessment systems.

Some progress has been made towards this recommendation. New staff have been appointed recently and with the support of the early years teacher team planning and assessment systems are in place. These are beginning to be implemented to help monitor and promote children's future learning. This includes the development of the learning environment and the opportunities for children to make choices and use a wider range of materials.

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 complaint 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):

- update the training regarding child protection for those identified as the designated persons responsible for coordinating and reporting concerns
- continue to develop the planning systems for children's learning and on going development (also applies to Nursery Education)
- develop management tracking systems to ensure that staff implement policies and procedures consistently at all times
- implement a regular appraisal system that includes identifying training and development needs for staff.

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):

- further develop the information available for parents regarding the learning programme.

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