

Unsworth Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	316748
Inspection date	06 July 2007
Inspector	Christine Marsh

Setting Address	Blackley Close, Unsworth, Bury, Lancashire, BL9 8LY
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Registered person	Deborah Jones
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Full day care
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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?

Unsworth Nursery opened in 1995. It is run by a limited company and operates from a pre-fabricated building located in the grounds of Unsworth Primary School. The nursery has access to a large play room, and a small room used for pre-school work that is also used as an office/staff room. There is an enclosed outdoor area. A maximum of 20 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each week day from 08.00 to 17.30 for 51 weeks of the year. The nursery serves the local community and has close links with the school.

There are currently 34 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 23 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions and come from both the local area and a wider catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs seven staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and from Unsworth Primary School.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright, clean environment. They are protected from infection by staff who promote good hygiene practices. For example, children know to wash their hands after using the toilet or having their nappy changed, and before they eat. Where children have specific allergies or health problems, all staff are trained to make sure that they can administer treatment should this be necessary. Children's health is maintained through these measures.

Continual access to water is available as children they have individual water bottles. This helps them to stay refreshed. All staff have current food hygiene certificates. Their knowledge helps to maintain children's health. Snack and meal times include plenty of fruit, such as fresh strawberries and bananas, and dried apricots. A cooked meal is provided at lunch time and always includes a vegetarian choice. Eating times are relaxed, friendly occasions where children develop social skills while receiving a nutritious diet. Snack times are flexible and children can choose when they are ready to have their snack. This helps children develop independence and encourages them to finish their games and gain a sense of accomplishment.

Children take part in regular physical play and are making good progress in their physical development. The large outdoor area is used daily for long periods. As far as possible the indoor provision is extended outdoors. For example, children paint with water on car tyres and chalk on walls developing their fine motor skills. Cutting and sticking is a favourite activity indoors and children concentrate as they cut small pieces of pink card to glue onto paper. They learn to control their bodies as they move, changing direction and following pathways as they ride on bikes and run around chasing foam staff have sprayed into the wind. They play ring games and take part in physical movement activities to music which encourage them to stretch, march, and curl up small, developing increasing awareness of different parts of their bodies. Children enjoy these activities that contribute towards a healthy lifestyle. The 'cosy corner' with its large cushions provides a comfortable area for tired children to snuggle up in if they need a rest. In this way children's needs for active and quiet periods are successfully met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are safe and secure and a welcoming environment is created. Space is generally well organised with different areas to play in. The setting is well equipped with an extensive range of toys and equipment that is in good condition and is age appropriate. Toys and games are set out for children when they arrive. Resources are clearly labelled and accessible to children who are developing their independence through choosing additional resources to develop their play.

Outdoors there are grass areas and a surface for play on bikes and with blocks for children to balance on. A kitchen for imaginative play, as well as sand and water trays and picnic benches provide opportunities for a range of activities. Dens are made outside and children have access to a range of toys and equipment to select independently.

Staff undertake risk assessments on toys and activities noting hazards and taking appropriate action. These are undertaken before children go outdoors to minimise any hazards. Fire evacuation practices are undertaken on a regular basis so that children are familiar with the

procedure in case of an emergency. Children also learn about how to protect their personal safety as part of their topics. For example, fire fighters visit with a fire engine and talk to children about safety. Staff are trained in child protection and have a good knowledge of appropriate procedures. This promotes children's welfare and safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are well settled in their setting. They show familiarity with daily routines, which helps them feel secure. Children are well motivated and eager to learn. They confidently approach staff for company or to help them to do things. Children support one another very well too. For example, one child says to another working on the computer, 'If you get stuck, I'll help'. Children freely access all activities and concentrate carefully on their self-chosen tasks. Children enjoy playing with malleable materials, for example, helping to make play dough, then using tools such as rolling pins and cutters to make shapes. Younger children join in whole group activities such as music and movement sessions to tapes and learn from watching older children respond to the instructions. Staff provide support and encouragement as necessary to enable them to participate fully.

Staff have a good understanding of young children's needs. They are knowledgeable about the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use this as a basis for collecting observations of children's learning which are filed in their records and shared with parents.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff provide a mixture of whole group activities, small group activities and one to one experiences for children. These opportunities for children to work individually with a member of staff, or in a small group, enable staff to get to know children well and to note any areas of their learning that they are having difficulty with. This helps children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan activities that are suited to children's needs and cover the six areas of learning.

Staff use humour to engage children in their thinking. For example, a member of staff refers to a cow in a jigsaw as a horse. Children laugh and point out her mistake. Such conversations help to consolidate children's knowledge and forge firm relationships between staff and children. Children enjoy stories, songs and rhymes regularly, and join in predicting what will happen next. Stories are read to small groups of children who can listen then move between this and other activities as they wish. In this way children are able to concentrate for the time that suits their current developmental needs. They enjoy singing, and songs such as 'Old McDonald had a farm', fit into the current farm theme. A mark making area provides opportunities for children to write freely although this is currently not used fully by the children. Children can write their name confidently, for example, on their gluing and sticking pictures.

Staff encourage children's creative development through acting out stories in the home corner and providing masks as props to further these activities. For example, 'Goldilocks and the three bears', and 'We're going on a bear hunt', provide practical experiences that consolidate children's knowledge of story structure. Children also enjoy painting and proudly state which is their picture. Their work is used to make attractive displays, however these are sometimes rather adult-directed which takes away some of the children's ownership.

Displays show the topics children have been learning about such as the farm, and mini-beasts. These topics are helping children learn about the wider world. Staff often incorporate a mathematical element into topics. For example, the children's paintings of mini-beasts are displayed in groups sorted into the number of legs the creatures have. In this way children's learning about numbers is reinforced. Attractive resources encourage children to learn about numbers. For example, children enjoy playing with the train carriages with teddy bears in which they sort and order according to number and colour. Self-corrective number jigsaws and shape jigsaws are also popular, and children accurately count from one to ten using these. They also show an understanding of the concept of zero through these activities. Children use computer programmes that help to consolidate their knowledge of the wider world.

Children's interest is stimulated through visitors who enrich the topics they learn about. For example, a visitor brought in mini-beasts, including millipedes and a snake which inspired the mini-beasts display. Parents expertise is incorporated into topics such as 'People who help us' as they share their work roles with the children. A nurse and opticians are among the visitors who talk to children about keeping healthy. They lend resources to supplement those of the nursery and to enable children to role play activities related to different occupations based on these experiences. Children consolidate their knowledge and understanding through these role play activities.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is supported in a variety of ways. For example, older children act as buddies to new children, showing them where particular toys are kept and reminding them to have their snacks. This encourages the new children to feel accepted and included as part of the group, and develops the caring skills of the older children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are well met. Staff liaise with parents and other professionals, where necessary, to support children's physical, social and emotional development. For example, if a child has specific behavioural or medical needs, staff have appropriate training to enable them to support the child effectively. This results in a fully inclusive ethos where children's development is effectively promoted and their self-esteem is nurtured.

Children learn about other cultures and beliefs through first hand experiences in learning about festivals. For example, they learn about Chinese New Year, doing the dragon dance, eating Chinese food, trying to trace Chinese symbols, and attempting to use chopsticks. Such first hand experiences are supplemented by books and toys that promote positive images of other cultures and traditions, and of people with disabilities. These experiences encourage children to view difference positively. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave well. A behaviour policy is in place, however, there is no named member of staff with responsibility for behaviour management issues should any problems arise. Children play happily together. They seek out the company of adults who listen carefully to what they have to say and respond thoughtfully to their requests. The 'Golden time board' helps staff and children to celebrate children's achievements, such as a child who tidies up without being asked. Staff write additional comments tailored to the needs of individual children so that their behaviour can be modified to benefit the child and their relationships with other children and adults. Staff explain the reasons for rules and praise children's good behaviour.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Settling in procedures are well thought through and gradual admission helps children settle effectively. Relationships are honest, trusting and professional. This allows any minor difficulties to be discussed and resolved quickly. Regular newsletters are provided for parents and carers to inform them of the topics their children will be learning. The parents of funded children receive details of the Foundation Stage and current topics in relation to the six areas of learning. Children's records are always available to parents and these contain observations to support children's achievements and show their progress. Photographs of children at play are included within children's records as evidence. In these ways parents are informed about their children's activities and become more familiar with the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents feel they are well informed about their children's achievements and progress.

Parents are invited to attend the annual trip with their child. Children enjoy their parents company on these trips and staff ensure there is a minimum of one member of staff to every two children, so that it is a safe and pleasurable learning experience. In the summer term staff prepare children for school by talking about starting at their new school, and having visits from staff at receiving schools. These discussions help children view the change as something to look forward to. Several parents have had long term connections with the provision as all their children have attended. This, together with staff and parent socials, helps to ensure relationships are positive and supportive for the children who attend.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Policies and procedures are thorough and are available for parents to keep them informed about the setting and their children's care. Policies are regularly reviewed and some need to be updated, for example, to include new terminology. Records provide details of each child's needs including consent forms and contacts. Documentation required by the National Standards is appropriately in place. This promotes the safety and well-being of the children.

The manager and her staff are committed to providing a quality service for the children who attend. The ratios of staff to children are always appropriately met. The setting has two deputy managers, as well as the manager, so that there is always someone senior present with overall responsibility, as staff work part time and the setting is open throughout the year. Staff attend training to update and increase their knowledge and several have undertaken professional qualifications while they have worked at the nursery. This commitment helps to promote children's welfare within the setting.

Routines are organised so that the day runs smoothly, but flexibly enough to allow children time to complete their play and activities. Space and time are well organised to ensure children benefit from their experiences. For example, large spaces are used for the whole group for dancing and movement activities. During much of the session the children freely access the different bays that are resourced for their play, such as, the number area, the reading area, the construction area and the home corner. Staff move between these areas supporting children as necessary.

Leadership and management within the setting is good. Children benefit from the good leadership of the provision. Staff know children and families well. Children are cared for in a positive and supportive environment which promotes their development. All children are valued appropriately and are able to develop fully in their learning, supported by well trained staff who are suitably qualified and vetted.

The manager is well organised. The curriculum is evaluated to see if any aspects need modifying in future teaching. This is especially important as some children attend for two years. Staff work together well as a team to promote children's health, safety, emotional well-being, and learning.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to implement weekly planning and record observations on children's learning. Appropriate systems are now in place and are working very effectively. Staff observe each other working with children and do observations which are recorded in children's files and used to inform future planning.

The provider was asked to ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. New resources have been purchased, for example, books and toy figures that represent positive images of people with disabilities and from different ethnic groups. These are used frequently by the children in their play, and some of the books are used to teach children through topics based on them. This increases children's awareness of diversity.

A recommendation was made to ensure that the fridge in the children's playroom was made safe. This was addressed by providing safety catches that prevented children from accessing the fridge. However, these catches have broken so that currently children can access the fridge. Therefore, this is raised as a recommendation in this report.

The provider was also asked to ensure that first aid training was attended. This has been addressed and all staff have current first aid certificates that include the treatment of babies and young children. This helps to keep children safe in the event of any minor injuries that occur.

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, that can be seen on request. The complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- ensure the fridge in the children's playroom is made safe
- designate a named member of staff to have responsibility for behaviour management issues
- review policies and procedures and update as necessary.

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):

- review the mark making area to consider ways of increasing its attractiveness to encourage children to use it.

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