

# Cedars Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	318589
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Julie Morrison
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Cedars Nursery Ltd.
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

The Cedars Nursery, Sunderland is one of two in the privately owned Cedars Nursery Company. It is situated in Ashbrooke and was registered in 1996. It occupies a large three storey semi-detached Victorian house in a residential area. The nursery is registered to take 81 children from birth to five years of age and currently has 63 children on roll aged from four months to four years. The setting has ten three year olds and 13 four year olds receiving funded education. The setting is open for 51 weeks of the year from 07.30 until 18.30.

The nursery serves families from a wide geographical area and represent a range of backgrounds. There are 11 members of staff at the setting, all of which hold a recognised qualification.

The nursery has achieved the 'Investors in People', 'Investors in Children' and the National Day Nursery Association 'Quality Counts' awards. The nursery benefits from qualified teacher support through the Early Years Development Partnership.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's good health is significantly enhanced as excellent standards of hygiene and cleanliness are maintained throughout the nursery. All staff have an excellent awareness of hygiene, which ensures that all food is appropriately stored and prepared, tables and benches are regularly cleaned and all staff wear aprons to serve food. Cleaning rotas are in place for each room and staff are proactive in ensuring that rooms remain clean and safe for children to move around in. Robust procedures are in place to ensure that staff attend to young children's hygiene needs very well. Nappies are routinely changed as well as regular checks to ensure they remain clean, staff wear aprons, wash hands and clean mats with antibacterial spray. A clear documented record of all nappy changes is kept and shared with parents. Consistent adult support and guidance helps young children to become increasingly independent in their personal care, for example, washing hands after the toilet and before food. Older children confidently use the toilet themselves, further developing independence. All children at the nursery brush their teeth after food and visits from the dental nurse help children to make a connection between good health and hygiene as they confidently explain, 'we brush our teeth because they have dinner on them and will fall out'. Staff further promote children's learning about good health and hygiene as they explain to children why they cannot use knives and forks which have fallen on the floor.

Comprehensive policies, excellent relationships with parents and relevant training ensures individual children are well cared for should they become ill, reducing the risk of cross infection. The effective recording of emergency consents, medication and accident records further promotes children's very good health and well-being. Staff make effective use of a daily room diary to ensure that all staff remain aware of any issues relating to individual children, for example, if they have recently had their inoculations. This ensures that children's good health is significantly enhanced. Clear routines allow all children at the nursery to benefit from regular exercise and fresh air which the children clearly love. Older children enthusiastically play on climbing frames, slides and use balance pots. Younger children play in cars, with balls and enjoy interacting with the older children. They all enjoy trips to the local park and enthusiastically talk about their recent visit to a farm. Such activities allow children to develop their gross motor skills and aids ongoing physical development.

Children enjoy a wide range of delicious and healthy snacks and meals that are planned and freshly made on site. Meals include lots of fresh fruit and vegetables, which promotes children's good health. Younger children enjoy the same meals, prepared to meet their individual needs. Planned activities such as smoothie making and tasting the food they have grown in the garden, encourages children to try new textures and flavours. This broadens children's experiences of food, and promotes healthy eating. Meal times are social occasions at the nursery with staff sitting and eating their dinner with the children. Children benefit from excellent opportunities to serve themselves, which further develops confidence and independence. Water coolers ensure that children can access drinks at any time and staff further provide regular drinks to ensure that children remain hydrated throughout the day. Up to date, accessible and organised details relevant to children's health, for example, details of any allergies are held securely on site and displayed in the individual rooms. Therefore, safeguarding the health of the children in their care.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, extremely well organised and comfortable setting where effective procedures ensure that any risks are identified and minimised. For example, clear written risk assessments are in place for each room and a checklist ensures that all areas are checked each day to ensure that they remain safe for children. Secure entry procedures such as locked doors, CCTV camera, signing in of visitors and clear collection procedures for children further safeguards children. However, not all parents consistently comply with entrance procedures. The space is very well organised so that children can move around freely and explore the space. All children have access to an excellent range of safe and well maintained toys and resources, stored in low level shelves or put out for children, enabling them to make independent choices. Staff ensure that all toys are regularly cleaned and are safe and suitable for the age and stage of development of the children.

Children are learning very good procedures to keep themselves safe. For example, they participate in safety week, where they receive informative visits from the fire brigade and police officers. Children enthusiastically participate, dressing up and sitting in the fire engine. A clear written fire procedure and regular fire drills further promotes learning and children confidently explain, that if there is a fire they 'must go outside and ring 999'. The majority of staff hold current first aid certificates, this means that children can have immediate and appropriate attention if required. Staff are vigilant about routinely checking the accident book to highlight any areas of recurring injuries and putting procedures into place to minimise risk.

There is a comprehensive outings procedure in place which ensures that children remain safe on outings. For example, low ratios are maintained, written risk assessments carried out and appropriate consents are in place. The setting benefits from a clear written safeguarding children policy and named child protection staff are in place. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities including, signs and symptoms of child abuse and procedures to follow should they have any concerns. This ensures children are well protected.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are developing close relationships with each other and staff who are warm, welcoming and give the children lots of attention. They eagerly participate in a wide range of child centred and adult led experiences which promote all areas of development. For example, children in the one to two year room enthusiastically explore the textures of cornflakes and cream and sit engrossed putting nappies onto baby dolls. The room is lively and staff are fully engaged in children's play ensuring that activities are undertaken with a sense of fun. For example, they sit and sing nursery rhymes with the children who are fully animated, jumping, dancing and clapping to the songs. The children love exploring natural products such a bottles of coloured water and watching themselves in the mirror as they enthusiastically beat a metal tin with a wooden spoon.

Older children freely move from one area to another and are spontaneous in their play and interactions with other children and adults. Staff interact well with them and children confidently approach them with questions and for support. For example, to help them as they use the computer. Children delight in using their imagination for instance using bandages from the role play area to dress up as mermaids and pulling skipping ropes behind them, 'we're taking our dog for a walk' they tell staff. Children have good opportunities to be creative, they play

with play dough, use glue and felt shapes to make pictures and enjoy dressing up as princesses and firemen. Children show an interest in books as they join in with well known stories at circle time. However, the large age range in the group means that some of the younger children lose interest and wander off or become disruptive at circle time. This has a negative impact on the rest of the group.

Children up to the age of three make good progress as staff have a clear understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They have clear plans in place and individual observations are recorded clearly linked to the framework. Children benefit from individual files, which include photographic evidence and examples of the children's work.

#### Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Clear and effective plans are in place covering all areas of learning and showing suitable differentiation for children's abilities. Staff monitor and observe children as they engage in activities and ensure that progress and learning is recorded. However, as not all staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage some are not able to clearly link observations to the areas of learning. However, good procedures ensure that staff who do have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage link the observations made to the areas of learning. As a result, children's individual files show a clear record of children's progress towards the early learning goals. Staff ensure that the room is well laid out and organised so that children can have effective learning experiences and lots of fun. For example, different play areas reflect different areas of learning such as role play, creative and computer area.

Children demonstrate a positive attitude towards activities and are eager to join in. They have formed close relationships with staff who they approach with questions and speak confidently to visitors. Children share well and show care and concern for one another, for example, as they tidy up they ask, 'I'll help, shall I put this away for you?' Children are beginning to show good levels of independence, for example, they know the nursery routines well, putting away aprons after they have used them. Staff further promote independence as they encourage children to try to put on their own coats for outdoor play.

Communication skills are beginning to develop, the children show good listening skills and confidence is developed as staff encourage them to sing songs to the rest of the group at circle time. There are some opportunities for children to begin linking sounds to letters as they talk about the day of the week and what letter it begins with and to practice mark making. For example, in the role play corner they 'write' prescriptions for the patients. However, opportunities to further develop handwriting or linking sounds to letters are limited. Children are beginning to use mathematical language, as staff ask 'it is big or small?' and encourage children to count the number of spots on a ladybird. Colourful displays show numbers and counting as part of planned activities. However, everyday opportunities to further develop children's use of counting and calculations are missed.

Children's ability to manipulate small tools is well developed. They hold pencils correctly, use glue sticks and rolling pins and knives to make shapes with play dough. Confidence in technology is developing as the children skilfully use a mouse to complete simple matching games on the computer. They have very good opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of the world through participating in stimulating and interesting activities. For example, growing vegetables in the garden and they are eagerly awaiting for a butterfly to emerge from its chrysalis. The children enjoy arts and crafts activities and the room shows a wealth of colourful

work which has been created by the children. Such displays help the children to feel valued and develop a sense of belonging to the setting.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children at the nursery are treated equally and individually, by staff who know them well. They ensure that children are cared for in a consistent and appropriate manner and gather information from parents in order to achieve this. For example, finding out about children's routines, how they like to sleep and comforters that they use. Children develop a sensitive awareness of diversity and an understanding of the needs of others. This is achieved through a range of activities and resources which promote a positive outlook of the wider world. For example, they received a visit from a Chinese dragon who danced for the children to show celebrations for the Chinese New Year. Colourful displays provide information about a child in Africa that the nursery sponsors, including a globe showing where she lives and photographs. Children learn about their local community as they go for walks to the library and the park, and take part in National bird watch week where they record the birds that they can see from their nursery. The setting is proactive in ensuring that any children with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported and fully included into the setting. The setting benefits from a 'Special Educational Needs Coordinator' who is clear about her role and responsibilities and is committed to working with parents and relevant organisations to ensure the individual needs of the children are met.

Staff interact positively with the children, who confidently go to them for cuddles, support and reassurance. As a result, children are very happy and settled at the nursery. Good behaviour is reinforced through praise and positive age appropriate behaviour management techniques, for example, explaining to children not to climb onto the play tent as they may rip it or hurt themselves. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Extremely detailed and informative information is given to parents before their child starts the nursery. Combined with introduction sessions, this enables children and their parents to become familiar with the nursery and its routines. Staff are warm and friendly to parents, which helps to promote a secure environment for the children. Information is displayed for parents on notice boards, on the website and through colourful informative newsletters. This ensures that parents remain up to date about activities in and out of the nursery. For example, the latest newsletter provides information about the new Early Years Foundation Stage for parents. A notice board is dedicated to the Foundation Stage, providing parents with written information about the curriculum as well as displaying the setting plans. A parents activity sheet further provides parents with information about the current topics and allows parents to extend their children's learning at home if they wish to.

Excellent procedures keep parents informed about their child's care and development. They receive informative daily dairy sheets, weekly sheets linked to the Foundation Stage and twice yearly detailed reports showing progression towards the early learning goals. Parents evenings are arranged to further discuss their child's care and development. Staff are proactive in ensuring that parents are able to attend visits to the setting, for example, arranging open mornings on a Saturday so that working parents can attend. An open door policy ensures that parents are able to discuss issues at any time they wish. Parents are extremely positive about the setting, describing it as 'a stimulating environment' where 'children are very happy and develop hugely as a result of great experiences'.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Robust procedures are in place to ensure that children are cared for and well protected by staff with relevant knowledge, experience and skills. Ongoing personal development is actively promoted and staff have access to a range of external training which benefits the care and development of the children and ensures that practice remains up-to-date. For example, Early Years Foundation Stage training. The setting is extremely proactive in ensuring that staff remain safe to work with children by carrying out vetting procedures on a regular basis.

Highly comprehensive documentation systems are effectively used to support children's care and learning, all comply with regulatory requirements and ensure consistency throughout the setting. Robust policies and procedures successfully underpin the work of the nursery and are used well to keep parents and carers fully informed about the childcare provision. There are highly effective systems in place to record attendance, ensuring that all children are signed in and out by parents, as well as effective procedures for recording medication administration and recording accidents. Daily room diaries ensure that all staff remain up-to-date about any issues concerning the care or development of the children. The setting benefits from having achieved the National Day Nurseries Association Quality Counts, Investors in People Award and the Investors in Children Award.

The nursery environment is extremely well organised, with clearly defined areas including areas for the children to rest. Children are able to make independent choices about their learning and play as they choose from an excellent range of resources, all of which are readily accessible. Staff are totally committed to the welfare and enjoyment of the children who, as a result, are very happy and settled within the nursery.

Leadership and management is good. The manager is totally committed to the setting and has a clear vision for development, including the well planned introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The manager liaises well with the senior manager and both support staff in planning and assessing the Foundation Stage. Further support is obtained by working with advisory teachers to ensure effective planning and children's development. Staff benefit from regular team and room meetings which have clear agenda's to ensure that meetings are productive. High priority is given to ongoing personal development and staff are well supported through regular appraisal systems.

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 the provider was asked to provide resources to promote diversity, ensure that the recruitment information included equal opportunities information and that children washed hands before snacks. They were also asked to highlight the purpose of activities to children and to ensure that assessment linked to the early learning goals.

Significant improvements have been made. A wide range of resources to promote diversity are available to children and an equal opportunities statement has been added to the recruitment policy. Robust procedures are in place to ensure that all children wash hands before eating. Staff clearly explain the activities which are available to children at the start of each session and assessment shows clear links to the early learning goals.

## 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 complaint 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):

- consider grouping of the children at circle time to ensure that it is suitable for all ages and stages of development
- further develop procedures to ensure that parents consistently comply with the policy regarding entrance to the nursery

#### 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 staff's understanding of the Foundation Stage to enable them to clearly identify learning outcomes for children
- extend opportunities to ensure that older children are further developing their mathematical and writing skills.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)