

Starfish Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY275059
Inspection date	29 October 2007
Inspector	Cathleen Howarth
Setting Address	52 Queens Road, Chadderton, Oldham, Lancashire, OL9 9HU
Telephone number	0161 626 9470
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Registered person	Starfish Day Nursery Ltd
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?

Starfish Private Day Nursery registered in 2003. It operates from a converted vicarage next to St Luke's Church in Chadderton, Oldham. A maximum of 45 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open weekdays from 07.00 to 18.30 and it is closed for Christmas and bank holidays. There are currently 65 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these, 17 receive funding for nursery education. Children mainly come from the local community.

The nursery has provision for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Places are provided for children referred through the local authority sponsored placement scheme.

The proprietor's are joint nursery managers and they are supernumery. They employ 19 members of staff. Of these, 16 members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are three members of staff that are working towards a qualification.

The nursery has attained a quality assurance award through the local authority. They have also obtained two other awards for healthy eating and food hygiene.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are well protected from infection and promptly taken care of if they have an accident or become ill. Medication, accident and existing injury records are systematically countersigned by parents to promote children's continuing care. Children's health care needs are professionally managed by informed staff working closely with parents.

Older children fully understand good health and hygiene practices. They know to wash their hands after playing outside, after using the toilet and before they eat. Staff implement effective procedures for nappy changing and toilet training, to ensure the personal care needs of early stage children are well met.

Staff know that habits learned in childhood are often continued into adulthood, therefore well-organised activities positively promote healthy lifestyles. Children are learning the importance of eating nutritious food. This is continually reinforced throughout the day. The cooks provide a balanced range of tasty, fresh food like vegetable lasagne. Food preparation procedures are sound. At meal times babies stay in their familiar environment, and they are fed and changed by their key person. Staff sit in a comfortable arm chair to bottle feed individual babies. At sleep time children use mats on the floor and are covered with clean blankets. This enables them to turn and stretch safely, and they definitely benefit from uninterrupted sleep.

With regard to nursery education there are various interesting activities planned, and a wide range of quality resources used, to successfully promote children's overall physical development. Movement, sense of space, health and bodily awareness, using equipment and tools and materials are effectively incorporated into children's play. Gross motor skills are positively developed when children play with push and pull equipment, such as taking dolly for a ride in the buggy, and when they use the climbing frame. Fine motor skills are continually developed when children multi task during art work, like cutting, gluing and sticking.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children clearly understand boundaries and limits. They know not to run fast inside, in order to keep safe. The environment is thoroughly risk assessed before children arrive, so they have ample choice in where they play. Staff have a wealth of experience, and sound understanding of the need for a balance between freedom and safe limits. They assist children as required on the climbing apparatus, safely promoting their independence. Children play with quality resources and equipment that are of good design and condition. Staff check them regularly for repair and replacement.

All fire safety precautions are in place, and children are learning about emergency evacuation procedures. This effectively encourages children to take responsibility for themselves. They are kept safe on outings when written risk assessments are completed and road safety is continuously reinforced. The current public liability insurance certificate is available for parents to view.

Children are professionally safeguarded. Staff fully understand their role in child protection. They know the procedures to follow should a concern arise.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the setting. They enter confidently and quickly engage with others and their self-chosen activity. Children have developed a real sense of belonging. Staff greet children warmly and attractively set out toys and equipment to welcome them to the setting. Children's art work is displayed to promote their self-esteem. The baby room is well-equipped, and staff have high regard for the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which is a framework to support children in their earliest years. The room is bright and cheery. Children are effectively encouraged to use all their senses. They feel and smell resources, such as thick, or diluted, coloured scented shaving foam. They confidently explore different cartons containing cooked pasta, chocolate chips and crumbly biscuits. Babies are learning to negotiate pathways when they crawl along the floor. They bang the drums and rattle the shakers experimenting with sound. Babies lie down on comfortable mats and some sit up using soft cushions for support. Their self-esteem is enhanced when they look at themselves in the mirror developing a sense of self and bodily control. There are colourful wall displays and a host of quality resources used effectively to support their overall care and development.

In the dolphin room mobile children are captivated during heuristic play, examining and investigating natural resources, such as brushes, sponges, mop heads and wooden spoons. They are learning to multi-task when they cut, glue and stick Halloween pictures for the wall display. They are engrossed in the home area using small world resources to cook and serve food. They carry pots and pans with items of food from one end of the room to the other, showing others what they have done. They feed the dolls, and dress and undress them. They have great fun negotiating pathways for cars in the multi-storey car park, moving cars up and down the ramps. Some children sit quietly on their own in the book area, examining books, turning them around and learning to hold them the correct way up to see the pictures.

Nursery education.

The pre school rooms are usually set out and organised in clearly defined areas to support the Foundation Stage and six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching and learning for nursery education is good. Overall staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. Children have a designated member of staff who is their key person, and they liaise closely with parents to reinforce children's learning at home. The key person is also responsible for maintaining children's development files. A new more effective recording system is emerging with regard to tracking and documenting children's progress using the stepping stones.

Children are routinely assessed by their key person after they have settled in. Children have made significant progress from their starting points, as shown through written observations and the assessment tool. Staff use this information to inform daily and weekly activity plans, in order to systematically support children to take the next step. A good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities encourages children to make choices and decisions to promote their confidence. Staff's questioning methods and expectations usually challenge and support children to use what they know and to learn more. As a result, children have developed a positive attitude towards learning. The atmosphere in the pre school is welcoming, informal and relaxed. Adults and children are purposefully occupied. Staff manage children's differing behaviour consistently well. Positive interactions are based on mutual respect.

Learning is fun at nursery. Children use their imagination fully and spontaneously engage in role play to become doctors, nurses and Little Red Riding Hood. The outside shed is currently the local shop where children practice buying and selling resources to use in their play. They exchange realistic coins and use pen and paper to make their mark, which to them is a shopping list. They have lots of opportunity to practise listening and talking skills. They take it in turns to take Bobby the toy donkey home at weekend. At circle time children recall their experiences using Bobby as a prop to help them remember and communicate.

Children demonstrate a real interest in numbers and counting when they enthusiastically join in number rhymes and songs. They are beginning to order magnet numbers on the board, and they use cards to match and sort everyday objects, like the small, medium and large bears. They are beginning to use mathematical language when they measure each other on the height chart using words like small and tall.

Children thoroughly enjoy construction activities. They are engrossed in their play when they use the small world tool bench to drill, hammer, saw and screw. They are busy fixing doors, tables, chairs and imaginary objects. Children's concentration is effectively developed when they learn how to use the mouse and keyboard. They click and drag enabling the flowerpot men to climb down the pipes they have fixed. They can click the right button to turn night into day when they design their own pictures on the computer using animals, houses and caravans.

Children are learning about traditions and festivals, such as Halloween. They imaginatively use empty giant card board boxes to make a bus, cutting out windows and painting on wheels and a door. Themed snacks and meals help to reinforce children's learning. Children recently enjoyed a French breakfast. A parent helped to prepare croissants and pancakes. She taught them to say hello and goodbye in French and children helped to make French flags to decorate the room.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated with equal concern. They are fully included and involved, and they show high regard for human differences, such as ethnicity and culture. Inclusion is an integral part of the nursery's ethos. There are good systems in place to provide for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Children's cooperation is appropriately affirmed by staff who consistently praise them in meaningful ways.

Children are looked after according to parents' wishes, obtained through various written parental consents. Parents commend staff for providing excellent quality care, and extensive learning opportunities. They are committed to supporting staff and children in as many ways as they can. There is an established parent's committee that meets every second month in an advisory capacity. The committee influenced the installation of the new door and ramp which leads into the baby's outdoor play area. Active citizenship is continually promoted. Parents and children have developed a strong sense of ownership and responsibility, demonstrated through various community events, such as raising money for children's charities. As a result, children are beginning to understand there are other children less fortunate than themselves.

Partnership with parents with regard to nursery education is good. Parents receive clear information about the provision for nursery education. There are wall displays, regular newsletters and notices sent home with children. Parents are kept well-informed of their children's progress when they talk to their child's key person, and when they view their child's

record of achievement. At the time of inspection this system was under review. Staff had decided to change the format of children's development books. Previously they had contained detailed written observations and evaluations, not clearly linked to the stepping stones. In addition, there were limited pictorial records of what children had achieved. Parents now find it easier to see how their children have progressed as more pictorial records are included which are clearly linked to the stepping stones and cover all areas of learning. Similarly this system also applies to care.

Parents are routinely encouraged to provide information for their child's baseline assessment, or starting points. Staff purposefully seek parent's views in order to continually improve the provision. Parent questionnaires and their involvement on the parent's committee are some examples of how this is achieved. Parents are fully involved in children's learning at the setting and at home through themed activities at the nursery. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The managers demonstrated a good level of commitment to training and personal professional development. They have attended various training events to keep up to date with current childcare practice, and both are working towards a level four qualification.

A strong feature is effective team working. There is a low turnover of staff and absenteeism, due to sickness, is low. Staff have a clear sense of purpose. They have high expectations of what children can achieve, in addition to setting high goals for themselves. They have worked hard to attain various quality assurance awards.

There are robust selection, recruitment and vetting procedures in place, including effective procedures for staff induction and appraisal. Management is clearly hands on. They continually support staff in their work. They operate an open door policy, and are very approachable. Between them they have considerable childcare experience, and best practice is reinforced by setting good examples. Adult to child ratios are continuously maintained to ensure the safety and well-being of children. Staff make full use of their time, and remain focused on the needs of children. Activities are well supported.

All the required documentation is in place, and regularly reviewed to promote children's care, welfare and learning. Records are stored securely, and easily accessible for parents to view.

Leadership and management in relation to nursery education is good. They are committed to the improvement of care and education for children in an inclusive environment. There are effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate provision for nursery education, and to ensure a rich and imaginative curriculum is delivered. There are secure procedures in place to positively support younger children's transition to the Foundation Stage. There are clear systems in place to ensure children meet their new class teacher before they leave the nursery.

Staff are willing to seek and take advice from other agencies to improve practice. They also use feedback from parent questionnaires. The managers set clear directives through the nursery's development plan. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last day care inspection two recommendations were raised to improve documentation and extend resources and activities to reflect diversity. The providers reviewed the medication policy and procedure, which is now fully compliant, in order to promote children's good health. There is now a greater variety of activities and resources promoting positive images of gender, culture, ethnicity and disability to encourage children to respect human differences in the wider community.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- make improvements as indicated in the nursery education section below.

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 children's records of achievement to show parents how their children have progressed in all areas (also applies to care).

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