

Round House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	229035
Inspection date	23 October 2007
Inspector	Adelaide Griffith
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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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Round House Day Nursery opened in June 1999. It operates from four rooms within two adjoining buildings. It is situated on the outskirts of Birmingham city centre. A maximum of 38 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 all year round except for bank holidays. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 28 children aged from seven months to under four years on roll. Of these, five children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area, as most of their parents travel in to work around the city centre. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 12 staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are clearly learning about personal hygiene through the daily routine and they are protected against infection. For example, liquid feeds for babies are prepared under rigorous conditions and all children are allocated individual sheets which are stored in their drawer. Children's good health is positively promoted due to detailed policies for sickness and a list of infectious illnesses is available. Effective procedures ensure that medication is administered competently and parental permission is obtained for seeking emergency medical treatment. Staff hold current first aid qualifications.

Children are gaining a broad understanding of healthy options through the serving of snacks which include raw vegetables and dried fruit. Freshly cooked, balanced meals are provided on a daily basis. Older children's independence is competently promoted as they are encouraged to serve themselves with some foods and younger children feed themselves. Water is available to children at all times due to the accessibility of individual bottles and beakers.

Younger children play outside on a daily basis. They move around in small groups and have access to bikes. They are clearly learning to maintain their balance as they play together on seesaws. They mount steps to the climbing frame steadily and are also learning to throw and catch large balls.

Children receiving early education also have opportunities for outside play. They run around in the available space and hop from one side to the other. They show awareness of space as they avoid others whilst jumping and they land comfortably on both feet. Under supervision, children are effectively encouraged to combine a range of movements. For instance, as they lie on the floor they arch their backs and extend their heads whilst attempting to lift their feet off the ground.

All children participate in quiet activities, as babies sleep according to an established pattern and younger children have a rest period after lunch. All children benefit from quiet periods when they listen to stories.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in an environment that is welcoming due to displays of their work. The premises benefit from natural light, and adequate temperatures are maintained throughout the nursery. There is sufficient space for children to move around and appropriate storage is provided. Children play in a small play area which is kept secure through a bolted gate. However, their safety is compromised due to procedures regarding access in the event of emergencies and also due to the parking of cars. Furthermore, the storage of cleaning equipment in toilets and low-hanging displays pose a potential hazard to children.

Children access suitable toys chosen for age-appropriateness, educational value and fun. These are checked and cleaned frequently. Equipment including high chairs are checked before use. Appropriate fire precautions are taken. Owing to regular fire drills children are gaining an understanding of leaving the building in the event of an emergency. On outings staff follow set procedures. For instance, adult to child ratios are maintained and children are adequately supervised during these activities.

Children's welfare is generally protected due to staff's sound knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. They are informed about procedures for reporting concerns and those that apply to allegations against staff. Supporting documentation is available.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework which is used to plan a wide range of activities. Observations of children's development are used to determine gaps, which are addressed. There is a cheerful atmosphere in the baby room due to the attractive displays and a broad range of resources available. Staff plan imaginatively to promote the development of babies. For instance, they implement body painting on large sheets of paper. This ensures that babies experience different sensations during play in paint. Staff are alert to the babies' preferences and have provided a range of books for interactive play on the floor. Bricks and pop-up toys are available to promote hand to eye coordination. Their language skills and sense of enjoyment are stimulated through music and the singing of nursery rhymes. Babies benefit from a wide range of play experiences.

Younger children's sensory development is effectively promoted through opportunities to explore materials including play dough. Their learning is competently extended by reading stories and enacting the main story line. Children participate with much laughter. Their imagination is well promoted whilst copying the actions of staff who pretend to walk through water and long grass. Children's confidence is growing as they are invited to choose from the selection of soft toys for suitable props in order to enhance the activities. Similarly, they are gaining independent skills as they access individually labelled drawers in which they store examples of their work. They join in with singing rhymes and they have opportunities to experiment on a broad range of instruments. Children participate in enjoyable activities.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and they plan activities appropriately. Themes are linked to areas of learning and stepping stones are included accordingly. Although entry profiles are prepared, most do not include aspects of children's development. Consequently, a clear indication of children's starting point is not always available. Observations are carried out to note children's learning. However, the use of this information to plan for children individually, for example, to move them on to the next stage and to provide challenges are not included routinely for all children.

Staff use a variety of teaching methods to promote children's learning. They talk and listen to children about weekend activities and contribute by sharing their own experiences. They encourage language for thinking by asking children questions, but they do not always allow sufficient time for a response. As part of the themed activities children explore objects such as leaves with the aid of a magnifying glass. Although staff make links with other items that come off trees, for example, the pine cones and the bark these are not developed to take into account children's individual experiences, for example, a visit to the park. Consequently, children's learning is not sufficiently extended.

Children have freedom to choose from the activities and they are clearly learning to take turns at card games. During story time they correctly respond to questions and predict what might happen next. Children's number recognition is appropriately promoted with the use of information technology and they receive adult support to achieve this. Children demonstrate their understanding of body activities. For instance, on return indoors after outside play they comment that they have to take their coats off because it is hot. Staff talk to children about

the different colours as they draw leaves. Children bang on drums rhythmically and chant numbers whilst others use a cylinder as a substitute for a trumpet and pretend to blow this. This clearly indicates how children's imaginative play is promoted.

Children are generally well behaved due to the positive strategies used by staff. They talk calmly to children and interact constantly. Children are learning what is expected of them as they are reminded to sit on the cushions when handling books. Children are beginning to understand the need for self-discipline as they take turns, at times without adult intervention. Children demonstrate social skills as they say 'thank you' as appropriate without adult prompting. Children are clearly learning boundaries of behaviour.

Staff work directly with children much of the time but do not allow sufficient scope for children to improvise and develop their play. For example, most activities are adult-led. Consequently, children's natural curiosity is not consistently promoted. Staff provide an environment that promotes children's independence appropriately with drawers that are accessible and most resources are within reach. Staff make reasonable use of the accommodation. For instance, displays of numbers and letters are at children's level. Additionally, posters which show children from a range of backgrounds are at a low-level. This contributes positively to all children's sense of belonging. The available outside space is covered with an all-weather surface to provide opportunities for outdoor play throughout the year. Generally, children are making moderate progress towards the early learning goals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met through care that is implemented as agreed with parents. For example, routines for babies. Children are clearly supported in gaining an understanding of different cultures through activities and a wide range of resources such as dolls, books and posters. They are gaining a precise understanding of the wider world and the local community through outings and participation in activities with residents of care homes. Primarily, they are learning about the environment on walks along the canal.

Staff have past experience of working with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They understand the need to work with parents to support children's development and they have access to external agencies including a special needs coordinator. For children who speak English as an additional language staff discuss with parents the range of words that can be used. Also, they use cards and labels to promote children's communication skills. This means that all children's needs are met.

Children are well behaved due to an atmosphere that encourages good behaviour. For example, they are praised consistently for effort and achievement. Consequently, children's self-esteem is consistently raised. Their social skills are effectively promoted at lunch time when they sit with staff and they are reminded to say 'thank you' and 'please' when served. They are gaining a clear understanding of taking responsibility for the environment by participating in tidying away following activities and some do so of their own accord. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

There is a positive relationship with parents based on friendliness and trust. Parents are provided with written materials about the provision and copies of policies including the complaints procedure are displayed. The provider has kept records of complaints. Parents are informed about activities for younger children. There is a clear agreement for the collection of children

in the event of an emergency and several contact numbers are available. Children benefit from the partnership with parents.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. All parents are provided with information about the curriculum and related planned activities. Parents are provided with progress reports and they are free to access their child's folders. They contribute to children's learning as requested, for example, in developing writing skills. Children's learning and development are effectively supported through the partnership with parents and carers.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are competently protected due to procedures which ensure that all staff are vetted. Most staff have worked in the nursery for a considerable period and this helps children to feel settled. There is good organisation for the care of children. For instance, a key-worker system promotes open communication with parents. Assistant and deputy managers are in post to ensure that there is a person in charge at all times to assume accountability for children's care. All new staff undertake an induction process that includes the mandatory components of health and safety and child protection. A music man visits twice-weekly to ensure that all children participate in the activities provided. Additionally, meals are bought in from suppliers and revised frequently.

All required documentation is available. All records are stored securely and updated frequently. There is clear awareness of procedures for the retention of records and for notifying Ofsted about significant changes. Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, and to promote the welfare, care and learning of children, are maintained.

The leadership and management of funded children is satisfactory. The registered person aims to expand the provision for all age groups. Senior staff are supernumerary and observe others during their work. However, clear guidance relating to teaching methods which support children's learning is not always provided. Consequently, children are not consistently helped to make progress effectively. Staff have recently attended training in creative play and have used the opportunity to ensure that others are suitably informed.

The strengths of the nursery include a highly qualified team. The registered person has given consideration to developing the outside play area in order to provide a more effective learning environment for children. Action plans from the local authority are implemented as suggested, for instance, to amend the planning of activities. Suitable leadership and management supports children in making developmentally appropriate progress towards the early learning goals. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to develop opportunities for children of different ages to socialise together. Children currently participate in some joint activities, for example, walks to local venues. The provider was also asked to ensure that staff are vigilant with regards to all aspects of children's personal hygiene. Children are supervised and are learning to maintain their personal hygiene effectively. Improvements were suggested to ensure children serve themselves at meal times and this is addressed competently.

At the last inspection the provider was asked to give consideration to improving children's independent access to books and reading materials and to ensure that all children are able to fully utilise the computer. Children now access books freely and the computer is at a low-level to ensure that all children have access at all times.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted received one complaint. Concerns were raised about the failure to notify parents and external agencies about the outbreak of a sickness virus. These concerns relate to National Standard 7: Health, National Standard 12 Working with Parents and Carers, and National Standard 14: Documentation. Ofsted asked the registered person to provide a report detailing the action that was taken regarding the alleged outbreak. Ofsted was satisfied that the registered person had taken appropriate steps to address the concerns raised. The provider remains qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

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):

- take positive steps to improve safety within the setting by implementing risk assessments with regard to hanging displays, the storage of cleaning equipment, and access to the outside play area.

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):

- improve the use of information gained from observations in order to plan for the next step in children's learning and to include challenges for all children
- improve the delivery of the curriculum to include more child-led activities and to provide opportunities for extending children's learning consistently
- improve guidance and support to assist staff in their teaching in order to help all children to learn effectively at all times.

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