

Cherry Tree Day Nursery (The)

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 206233 |
| Inspection date | 18 July 2007 |
| Inspector | Sally Ann Smith |
| Setting Address | 1 Cherry Garth, Hilton, Derby, Derbyshire, DE65 5FT |
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| Registered person | Veronica Irons |
| 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?

Cherry Tree Day Nursery was registered in October 1996. It operates from converted rooms in the owners own home in Hilton, Derbyshire. A maximum of 18 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery opens five days a week from 08:15 to 18:00 all year round.

There are currently 45 children aged from three months to eight years on roll. Of these, 23 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There are eight full-time and part-time staff, all of whom have early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good health and hygiene practices through regular and consistent routines. They independently wash their hands when necessary, using the hand

basin in the room. Children understand that tables are cleaned before they eat their snack to prevent germs spreading. Children ask for clean cups if they accidentally drop theirs on the floor 'cos it's dirty now.'

Children receive appropriate care if they are ill or have an accident because staff have good procedures in place. Staff are aware of children's individual health care needs and all necessary consents are in place to support this. Permission is obtained from parents or carers to seek any emergency medical advice and treatment and staff are conversant with procedures for notifiable and communicable diseases. Parents are made aware of any signs, symptoms and outbreaks of contagious illnesses so that positive steps can be made to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures can be taken when children are ill. All staff have attended first aid training to ensure they are aware of the correct procedures to follow to maintain children's health.

Children's dietary and religious requirements are met appropriately and a range of healthy snacks and meals are provided. Fresh fruit and vegetables, some of which are grown by the children are a regular feature on the menu. Children eat potatoes that they have dug up the previous day. Snacks consist of raisins and chopped up fruit which children help to prepare. Children sit at tables in small groups for meals supported by a member of staff, therefore encouraging socialisation. However, the organisation of meal-times means that groups are not served at the same time. Instead children are served individually from a central serving table. Whilst all are provided with plenty of choice this takes time to respond to each child's requirements. As a result, some children complete their meal before other children have been served theirs.

Children enjoy a good range of physical play activities which contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Older children enjoy the 'free flow' system where they can choose to play outside at any time during the day. They use a wide range of toys and equipment such as bats and balls, footballs, wheeled toys and a climbing frame. Children enjoy washing and pegging the clothes out to dry. They participate in obstacle races where they jump through hoops and balance bean bags on their heads. Music and movement sessions enable children to move their bodies in different ways. They pretend to be animals preparing for hibernation and scurry, stretch, shiver and curl up before going to sleep.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into an environment which is bright and cheerful and their work is prominently displayed. Notice boards provide information about planned activities and staff caring for children. Resources are stored within children's reach enabling them to make choices regarding their play. The areas used for children's play are made safe due to the positive steps taken by staff to minimise risks. Checks are undertaken both inside and outside to ensure that any hazards are identified and removed such as broken toys or equipment.

Regular discussions and planned activities ensure that children develop a good understanding of how to stay safe. For example, children learn how to handle knives safely when cutting up fruit. They know that it is dangerous to play with matches and enjoy visits from the fire service who reinforce all aspects of fire safety. Emergency evacuation procedures are regularly practised in the nursery. A visit from the ambulance service and a paramedic shows children how patients on stretchers are securely strapped in when the ambulance has to travel quickly in an emergency. Children are keen to share their knowledge of safety and demonstrate an appropriate awareness

of what to do if approached by a stranger. Children develop a good understanding of nursery rules, for example, they understand not to run indoors in case they fall and hurt themselves.

Children are protected from harm as staff demonstrate a sound understanding of child protection procedures. They are familiar with the signs and symptoms of abuse and their duty to report any concerns. Staff are aware of the implications for practice should an allegation of abuse be made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Most children eagerly enter the nursery and settle well or are supported by staff if less confident. Many older children skip into the room without a backward glance to their parents or carers. Children form good relationships with each other and greet their friends as they arrive. Children play together well, chatting to each other and sharing the resources. They play equally well on their own particularly when playing with small world resources. For example, they play with the pirate ship and talk to the pirates as they prepare them for battle. They are fully engrossed in their imaginative world. Staff are supportive and caring towards the children and take a genuine interest in everything the children say and do. This helps children to feel valued as they know their contributions are important. Good organisation of activities and routines ensures that children can initiate their own play as they freely choose to spend their time engaged in activities that interest and motivate them. The 'Birth to three matters' framework is effectively used to enhance practice for children under three years. Planning incorporates all aspects and components of the framework and staff adapt activities to ensure younger children are able to participate and make progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. A good balance of adult-led and child-initiated play ensures children are motivated and engaged in a broad range of developmentally appropriate activities. Staff use their good knowledge of the Foundation Stage to provide a stimulating environment in which children learn. Staff have a good understanding of how stepping stones are used to demonstrate children's progress towards the early learning goals. Staff are particularly adept at questioning children to extend their knowledge and understanding in all areas of their development so that children progress well. Continuous learning plans displayed in each play area provide prompts for staff to focus on to support children's play and learning. Staff generally adapt activities well in order to sustain children's interest. However, children are not grouped appropriately at registration and circle time to ensure that all children are sufficiently challenged.

Each week a specific area of learning is given particular emphasis but effective planning ensures there is a balance across all six areas of learning. The curriculum includes a range of topics and themes which makes learning a rewarding and enjoyable experience for children. Staff use various styles of observations on the children to ensure that they have an accurate assessment of what children can do well and where children require support.

Children are happy and settled and enjoy having the freedom to choose their own activities whether these are inside or outside. As a result, they have a positive attitude to learning, becoming confident and self-assured in their play. Children are able to express their likes and preferences and will make it quite clear if they do not want to participate in an adult-led activity. Children play together well cooperating in joint decision making processes. For example, children decide and vote for the pirate ship to play with after lunch. Children's independence is fostered

as they put on their own coats and shoes before going outside to play or putting on overalls before messy play.

Children regularly make marks and develop early writing skills. They take orders in the florists and write letters to send home. Children regularly paint using their fingers as well as brushes. They attempt to write their names on completed work and see labels and captions underneath. Children learn to recognise their own names and those of their peers. Some children are supported as they listen to the initial sound of their first name. Children listen to stories with great interest and are pleased when it is a favourite choice and say 'we love this story.' Children ask questions and as a result learn that a 'herd' refers to a group of elephants or 'blushing' means to be embarrassed. When exploring dinosaurs they discuss words such as prehistoric, extinct and herbivore. Components of the book such as the title, author and illustrator generates much discussion and reinforces children's learning. Children look at beginnings and ends of stories and put a series of words such as storm, sun, puddle, rain and clouds into the correct sequence.

Children use mathematical language during their play and often practise their counting skills. They sing songs to count on and back and hold up the correct numbers of fingers accordingly. Children develop an understanding of positional language such as in front of and behind or over and under. They learn about time as they see how long it takes for their cakes to bake in the oven. They make spinning tops out of paper drawing round large and small circles and develop an understanding of circumference, semi-circle and segments. They correctly use a ruler to divide the circle into various sections before colouring these in. When cutting up fruit such as oranges, children learn about halves and quarters. Children take time as they attempt to put letters into envelopes realising that they need folding before they will fit. Children competently display their skills when using the computer and select programmes independently. They use technology in their everyday play, for example, talking to each other on the telephone in the home corner. However, opportunities to look at and explore how things work is limited.

Children take part in activities to learn about living things and show curiosity when bug hunting. They take great interest in the life cycle of a butterfly as they nurture their own eggs and watch them transform into caterpillars and then butterflies. They watch in amazement as the butterflies emerge from the cocoon and stretch their wings to dry. Children tend to vegetables and flowers, weeding and watering as necessary. They particularly enjoy tasting their produce such as new potatoes and green beans. Children use all their senses as they cook popcorn. They touch and compare the corn before and after cooking, smell the aromas in the kitchen and laugh at the popping sound it makes. Children are able to independently access the art and craft area and make a range of items using recyclable materials. A large cardboard box becomes a boat or a rocket to the moon. They make good use of their imagination in planned and spontaneous role play situations both inside and out. Children experiment with musical instruments and sounds and attempt to make a noise from a Didgeridoo. Children generally have great fun in all that they do.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into the setting and staff ensure all children are able to play with toys and equipment which meet their individual needs. Older children at registration sing a welcome song to each other acknowledging each child by name. This combined with photographs and displays of children's art work help them to develop a good sense of belonging. Strong relationships are forged with parents and information is exchanged daily. Children under two

years have daily diaries where staff record observations of their play, sleep, toileting and meals. Parents receive a prospectus with information about the nursery and the policies and procedures in place to support children's care, learning and play. They are informed of the complaints procedure should they be unhappy about any aspect of the care their child receives.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are learning about different cultures and benefit from some planned activities which help them value and respect diversity. Staff encourage parents to be involved and talk to children, share experiences and show the children various artefacts. Children see staff dressed in saris and have access to their own in the role play area. Children experiment with henna as they create their own Mehndi patterns on their hands. Welcome signs in different languages and writing styles demonstrate to children how words are conveyed in different ways. Children celebrate Chinese New Year, Diwali and Hannukah. However, staff have identified this as an area for improvement as children have limited opportunities to further develop their knowledge and understanding of other cultures. Stories and discussion raise children's awareness about people's differences. All children are fully included in the nursery and activities and routines are organised so that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities can participate. Staff learn sign language and designated areas around the rooms have pictures and signs so that children understand what is expected of them. Pictorial routines show children what is happening throughout the day. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that the needs of children are met.

Children learn right from wrong and show concern for others through the use of effective strategies. Staff regularly praise and encourage children to behave well. For example, children are told 'that is very good sitting and listening.' Children are learning effective strategies to manage their own behaviour such as being reminded about nursery rules. Children remind each other that it is 'tidy up time' and staff refer to the rules when talking to children about inappropriate behaviour. Children are given stickers to reward good behaviour or for trying something new such as a different activity or a different food. Children learn to work collaboratively and make group decisions such as selecting a large piece of equipment to play with.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Newsletters and notice boards provide information for parents regarding the Foundation Stage, detailing current topics and themes. Parents regularly discuss their child's progress with their child's key person, although no formal meetings take place. Parents share what they know about their child's learning which staff use to help with planning a suitable range of activities to meet their needs. Parents speak highly about the quality of care and education provided and the good progress made by their children. Key workers provide suggestions for parents to help with their child's learning at home. Children have their own 'homework' book with different activities to complete and are keen to share their achievements with staff. Children complete some work sheets but these are not used on a regular basis, the emphasis being on activities that make learning fun.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's safety and welfare is effectively promoted as recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well-protected and cared for by staff who have very good knowledge and understand of child development. Generally routines are well-organised and staff are effectively deployed to support children's care, learning and play, although meal-times lack the necessary organisation to ensure that all children's needs are met well. Staff know how the setting works and what is expected of them, having the required skills and experience to carry out their role.

They work together well to ensure that children are appropriately supported during their time spent at nursery. Operational policies and procedures are robust, understood by staff and implemented effectively. Registers accurately record the time of both children's and staff's arrival and departure.

The leadership and management is good. Staff are encouraged to contribute and share their ideas for children's learning. Regular discussions and staff meetings take place to monitor and evaluate the provision and identify areas for improvement. Action plans clearly identify how these improvements are to be achieved within specified timescales. Staff appraisals are conducted regularly to identify individuals strengths and weaknesses and areas for professional development. Regular training opportunities ensure staff are able to increase their knowledge and skills and also develop areas of specific interest. The group receives support from other professionals and welcomes any advice or support to enhance children's play and learning.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery was required to: improve the attendance register to record children's arrival and departure; improve the provision of some domestic style furniture for children under two years. Staff now record the time of children's arrival and departure. A child-size table, chairs and settee are provided in the baby room.

With regard to the nursery education the nursery was required to: ensure younger children do not limit learning opportunities or abilities of older children to concentrate; increase opportunities for children to choose from a range of different craft resources to plan and make their own designs. Staff have changed many aspects of the routine to extend the learning opportunities for older children and provide sufficient challenge. For example, story time is separated into groups of older and younger children. This enables the older children to sit and concentrate without disruption. Staff extend their vocabulary by introducing new words and encourage questioning and discussion. Children freely access a variety of art and craft materials to create their own designs.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 one complaint has been made to Ofsted.

Concerns were raised regarding ratios. This concern relates to National Standard 2: Organisation. A Childcare Inspector visited the premises unannounced and found there was no suggestion of a breach to National Standard 2. However, an action was raised under National Standard 14: Documentation. The provider was required to maintain a record of staff's attendance. An action response was received within the specified timescale. Ofsted are satisfied that the provider remains qualified for registration.

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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):

- continue to develop the range of planned activities to raise children's awareness of cultural diversity and disability.
- improve further the organisation of staff, space and resources at meal-times to ensure children's needs are met effectively.

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 organisation of circle time to allow time for sustained concentration and ensure that all children are sufficiently challenged
- increase opportunities for children to show an interest in why things happen and how things work.

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