

Wise Owls Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY245408
Inspection date	12 October 2007
Inspector	Sally Elizabeth Lee
Setting Address	North Warwickshire & Hinckley College, Hinckley Road, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, CV11 6BH
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Registered person	The Governing Body of North Warwickshire & Hinckley College
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?

Wise Owls Day Nursery operates from a purpose-build nursery on the site of North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, Nuneaton. The nursery is self-contained and has three playrooms, a kitchen, bathroom, staff facilities and office. There is an enclosed outdoor areas. Wise Owls Day Nursery serves the college staff, students and the local community.

There are currently 65 children from birth to eight years on roll. Of these, 12 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. Children attend a variety of sessions. The setting is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those for whom English is an additional language.

The group opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 08:00 to 18:00 and holiday care is offered to children up to eight years during the school holidays.

Fourteen members of staff work with the children, all of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification. The setting receives support from an advisory teacher from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy and are protected from infection because staff follow clear health and hygiene procedures. For example, disposable gloves and aprons are always used while changing nappies. Children learn about good hygiene from the routines in place which encourage them to wash their hands before eating and after toileting. The bright and attractive foamy soap dispensers together with picture guides next to the wash basins make this process inviting. Children are protected in the case of an accident as all staff are first aid trained and all accidents are recorded carefully and parents sign the record. The procedure for administration of medication is equally strong which ensures parents are kept fully informed of these aspects of their child's care.

Children thoroughly enjoy the meals and snacks provided, all of which are cooked and prepared on the premises. Hygiene procedures within the kitchen are good and the menus are varied and take account of children's overall nutrition. Children are well hydrated because drinking water is provided for older children to access freely and younger children are encouraged to drink regularly. Any special dietary needs children may have are recorded before care begins and this information is transferred to the kitchen and the playrooms to ensure children's dietary needs are met at all times.

Children delight in the freedom of playing in the outdoor area. They laugh as they run and skip faster and faster. They develop skills in climbing and balancing as well as learning to control wheeled toys as they push, pull and pedal. The range of resources for outdoor play is wide and older children concentrate hard as they learn to manoeuvre roller skates, delighting in their growing skill. They roll tyres and run after them as the tyres roll away from them. They take part in circle games and action songs both indoors and out. However, babies and very young children have very limited access to outdoors and this affects their health and well-being. Indoors children use wide variety of tools and equipment as they play in the sand, water, playdough and graphics area with developing control and precision.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in bright, attractive premises. Staff have high regard for the children when they create their displays and ensure that these are at child height so that children can develop a sense of pride in their own work and a sense of belonging as they see the photographs of themselves, their friends and their families. The purpose-built accommodation meets all children's needs and provides areas for toileting and cooking as well as the play rooms. In addition, there are staff facilities, office and laundry. The playrooms are all light, bright, well-lit and ventilated.

Children benefit from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment. For example, attractive low level tables and chairs are provided in all rooms which are appropriate and safe for the children who use that area. Older children are able to access the toys and resources independently and are encouraged to tidy them away after use. All the resources are checked regularly for safety and hygiene and staff ensure that any new resources are safe, suitable and meet all the appropriate safety standards.

Clear and detailed risk assessments have been carried out and are reviewed regularly and there are clear procedures in place to check safety equipment. However, the fire exit at the front of the building is sometimes blocked by pushchairs and this puts children at risk of harm. Older children learn to keep themselves safe because they learn about road safety during visits from the road safety officer and their subsequent art work is displayed to remind them of how to cross the road safely. In addition, all children practice the fire evacuation procedure every term.

Children are further protected because there is a clear safeguarding children procedure in place. Staff have regular training in child protection and are clear that the welfare of the child is their first priority in such situations.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young children make progress and enjoy their time at the nursery because staff are sensitive to their individual needs and have made good relationships with them. In the baby room staff chat to and play with the babies. They show children the books they have made from photographs of the babies taking part in different activities and the children delight in recognising themselves. Even very young children have regular opportunities to experiment and take part in messy play activities, discovering the different properties of blancmange, custard and beans as they play, feeling the texture and rubbing it between the fingers.

Older children are beginning to experiment with mark making and creativity. Staff value their efforts, making attractive displays of the children's own work. At this age children often do not recognise their own names so staff display their work with a photo of the child who created it so that the child can then feel a sense of pride and achievement. For example, a picture is displayed of a roundabout a child had drawn for the bus. During this activity the child started to talk about his own family, so a family was included in the bus, together with a picture of the child involved in the drawing. Staff are skilled at enabling children to achieve and they encourage children's independence. For example, a child was upset when he first arrived so a member of staff took out some bubbles and began to blow the bubbles to distract him. Soon he was involved in this activity and wanted to hold the large pot of bubble mixture for himself. As the pot was very large and this was not practical, the member of staff found a small pot and put some of the mixture in there so that he could achieve. He was delighted in his newly discovered skill.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children come in to the nursery confidently and settle well. They are eager to take part in the activities and be fully involved in the daily life of the setting. They show curiosity and ask questions to find out more. They contribute well at circle times but are learning to listen when appropriate. They have developed good relationships with staff and have made strong friendships within the group. Children thoroughly enjoy books and stories and will eagerly ask for favourite stories to be read, often joining in with familiar phrases, enjoying the use of words and playing with the rhyming. They make marks in the graphics and role play areas, recognising and often writing their own names. They experiment with mark making, for example, during the 'write dance' session and with chalks during outdoor play.

Children are learning to solve problems as they build with a variety of different construction sets and junk modelling. For example, they show with pride the fire engine they have made

with the ladder that really works so the firemen 'can reach the cats'. They learn to recognise shape as they cut in the graphics area and play shape recognition games. They count in their everyday activities and routines, most children being able to count to 10 and some beyond. They learn about volume as they play in the sand and water and measure out ingredients in the cooking activities. Children benefit from free access to painting, collage and drawing activities. They create some delightful pictures on their own and in groups which are well displayed around the setting. They enjoy role play in the autumnal wood or the garden centre, shop or kitchen. They play music both inside and outside the setting.

Children learn about change and difference in the natural world by looking at the seasons. For example, at harvest time they make bread, play in the fallen leaves and talk about what is happening in the fields round about. They explore the properties of sand and water as they pour through tubes and funnels. They learn about their local community by trips into the college and the surrounding area and from visitors to the nursery. They are learning to use information and communication technology, developing skill with the mouse as they use the computer.

Staff have developed good systems to monitor and assess children's progress and to plan activities to help them take the next step in their learning. This work is seen as important and staff are given time within the setting to enable them to do this. All pre-school staff contribute to the planning and this enables all key workers to ensure activities meet the needs of their key children. Weekly evaluation of activities and progress helps to monitor the effectiveness of the nursery education. Staff are skilled at valuing children's contribution to the setting and they encourage the children to take in active role in, for example, planning the new outdoor area. The children's drawings and ideas are then displayed and taken into account when plans are drawn up. Organisation of space and resources is very good. Children confidently access the resources and move around the setting from area to area. However, time within the session does not flow freely, with children not having long periods of time for free play. They spend only short periods of time before they have to tidy away for small group time, snack time or outdoor play. This prevents children from re-visiting and further developing their play and does not encourage children to develop concentration skills. Staff work very well together as a team and provide a happy, relaxed environment where children are able to make good progress in their nursery education.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have their individual needs met because staff work closely with parents both before care begins and once children have started at the nursery. Staff show care and respect to the children and their parents at all times and have regard to the detailed and clear equal opportunities policy which is in place in the nursery. Children learn about the wider world from the good range of resources provided by the nursery which show positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. They enjoy visits from the college chaplain to talk about harvest, Christmas and Easter. They celebrate festivals throughout the year and especially enjoy birthday celebrations. Visits from the wider community include the police, road safety and fire safety officer as well as the warden from the local wildlife sanctuary. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

There are currently no children attending who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities but staff have previous experience and ensure all children are included in the activities and daily routines of the setting. They work closely with parents and other professionals to meet children's individual needs and are able access support and advice when appropriate.

Behaviour is generally good. Children are learning the difference between right and wrong from the excellent role models provided by the staff, who are quiet, kind and polite. Staff use praise and reward very well and children like to receive stickers for good listening or good sitting. Children try to please and enjoy the praise they receive, for example, a small child rewarded for 'good jumping' remarks 'I'm lovely at hopping as well'. Children in the pre-school room have kind hands charts which record their stickers and when children have five stickers, they are awarded a certificate. The golden rules apply throughout the nursery and this approach ensures there is consistency in all rooms and children understand the expectations when they move from room to room. Staff encourage children to be kind and explain why a particular behaviour is not acceptable. Children are gently reminded to say 'please' and 'thank you'.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. All parents of children who attend the nursery receive clear and detailed initial written information about the setting and this includes the main policies and procedures of the setting as well as brief details of the curriculum. Information about each child is recorded in the child profile form which is completed jointly by parents and key workers so that staff are aware of any special needs, likes, dislikes or fears a child may have. Parents are able to access their child's developmental records at any time and are encouraged to attend the family learning days when they can take part in the activities of the nursery and have time to talk to their child's key worker about their achievements. Regular newsletters and a wealth of information displayed for parents keep them in touch with the daily life of the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are protected by the clear and detailed recruitment, vetting and induction procedures which are in place and ensure that children are cared for by staff who have the appropriate training and experience to meet children's needs. Staff training needs are clearly identified and monitored to ensure they are up to date with new initiatives in the early years field. Staff ratios are maintained carefully.

Children have their needs met because there is a key worker system in operation throughout the nursery which enables children to have a stable carer on a day to day basis. The key worker is mainly responsible for liaison with parents and for children's developmental assessments. However, although key workers in the toddler unit are mainly responsible for the daily care of their children, for example, nappy changes and feed times, this does not happen in the baby unit. This affects babies' and very young children's overall health and well-being.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Line management within the college takes an active role and interest in the nursery and ensure any staffing, premises and financial matters are dealt with efficiently and promptly. The management team of the nursery work hard to monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education and to ensure all children make progress in their learning. They effectively evaluate their own practice and develop action plans to improve the provision. They show a strong commitment to improve and work closely with the advisory teacher, quickly taking on board any advice given.

All the necessary documentation is kept in an efficient and appropriate manner. Policies and procedures are updated regularly and are easily accessible to both parents and staff. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to conduct a risk assessment on the staff toilet area. The setting has since moved premises and risk assessments are conducted on all areas and updated regularly which protects children and adults. They were also asked to further protect children by ensuring the visitors record is used at all times and this is now being done.

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):

- keep fire exits clear at all times
- ensure babies and very young children have regular opportunities to go outside
- ensure each child is allocated to a key worker who is mainly responsible for his/her well-being on a daily basis.

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):

- organise the session to allow children time to develop and re-visit their play and to develop concentration 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