

Ducklings Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY272143
Inspection date	11 September 2007
Inspector	Lisa Jeffries
Setting Address	170 Attleborough Road, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, CV11 4JW
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Registered person	Yvonne Buxton
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?

The nursery was registered in 1997. It is located in the area of Attleborough in Nuneaton and is within a short distance from the town centre. The nursery has sole use of the premises with access to toilet facilities, a staff room and an office. There is a fully-enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday 07:30 to 18:00, 51 weeks of the year and offers full or sessional day care for children. There are currently 118 children on roll, which includes 31 funded three and four-year-olds. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

Twenty five members of staff work with the children. Seven members of staff are qualified to NNEB level and four members of staff hold a diploma in child care. Another seven members of staff have early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualifications level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from an advisory teacher.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are looked after in warm, clean premises where they become increasingly independent in their personal care. They learn to understand the importance of good hygiene as members of staff adhere to consistent routines to ensure the children in their care remain healthy. This encourages children to learn about and adopt simple personal hygiene practices such as washing and drying their hands after going to the toilet and before eating and fetching a tissue to wipe their nose. All members of staff have attended paediatric first aid training and are confident to administer first aid in the event of an accident. To support this, first aid boxes are fully-stocked, up to date and easily accessible. Accidents are clearly recorded and procedures are in place for the recording and administration of medication to children. There are appropriate arrangements in place for when children become unwell and parents have given their written consent for staff to seek medical advice or treatment in the event of an emergency.

Children's health is effectively promoted because the nursery provides home-cooked, healthy and nutritious food such as pasta, meatloaf and vegetable lasagne. The nursery cook provides children with a selection of fresh vegetables on a daily basis including potatoes, carrots, peas, swede and sweetcorn and complies with their individual dietary requirements. Children have the opportunity to taste new foods through the celebration of different festivals and they use chopsticks to eat noodles during Chinese New Year. Mealtimes are relaxed, social occasions when they all sit together around child-sized tables. A 'please and thank you' song prior to eating encourages children to use manners and contributes towards it being a happy, positive experience. Children are offered drinks regularly throughout the day to ensure they are well hydrated. Older children help themselves to water from a trough in the playroom.

The nursery is committed to following children's personal routines in relation to food, sleep, likes and dislikes. Children's individual care needs are successfully met because the playschool obtains medical information, daily routines and details of any allergies at registration. Members of staff understand that children who are well nourished, alert and comfortable have the energy and enthusiasm to benefit from the activities on offer and enjoy the company of others.

Children have daily opportunities to participate in outdoor physical play. They have access to a playhouse, a wooden boat, wheeled-toys, footballs and a sand pit. Children laugh in delight as they balance on tyres and crates before jumping off. In the fully-enclosed garden children thread ribbons through wire mesh to create patterns, endorsing their fine motor skills. Indoors, children develop spatial awareness and coordination whilst using play apparatus such as climbing frames, tunnels and slides. Dancing, singing and action rhymes are popular and children move enthusiastically to familiar tunes. As a result, children benefit from plenty of fresh air and exercise and they become skilful in a range of movements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are exceptionally well cared for in premises that are secure, child-friendly and fit for their purpose. Members of staff ensure that the environment gives children easy access to a comprehensive range of facilities that successfully promote their development in all areas. Children use equipment that is highly suitable, well-maintained and conforms to safety standards. Children are able to move around the premises freely as members of staff have considerable

awareness of safety and have extensive precautions in place. Consequently children discover boundaries and limits, learn about rules and are protected whilst being active.

Children's safety is effectively promoted because members of staff take positive steps to minimise risks to children, for example, through comprehensive, regular risk assessments and fire drills. A cohesive emergency evacuation plan is rehearsed and children are confident in their actions in the event of an emergency. Members of staff are proactive in identifying hazards and raising children's awareness by discussing safe practices with them, such as road safety. Regular visual assessments are conducted to ensure that children are continually kept safe. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they tuck their chairs under the table after each activity and show awareness of space, themselves and others. There are efficient arrangements for sleeping children, who are monitored regularly. A high level of supervision ensures that the risk of accidents is significantly reduced.

Children are unreservedly safeguarded as members of staff have a significant understanding of their role in child protection and are confident to implement local procedures. They are vigilant, aware of how to seek advice and are exceedingly knowledgeable about the children in their care and highly intuitive of their individual needs. Children feel comfortable expressing their feelings and know when and how to ask for help. Parents are aware of the nursery's procedures and the action they intend to take should they have any cause for concern. This supports children's welfare and promotes their emotional stability.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are happy, secure and settled and they are warmly welcomed by staff. Close and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and enable them to develop feelings of self-worth. Children's play and learning is inspired through staff's high quality interaction with them and they develop confidence through encouragement and a high level of support. Staff's forward-thinking and dedicated attitudes ensure that children's welfare is actively promoted. All children clearly enjoy their time at the nursery.

Children have access to a broad range of resources, encouraging their autonomy and helping them to achieve in all areas. Toys are versatile, fun and offer sufficient challenge. Children's individual needs are consistently well met as members of staff have a secure understanding of their backgrounds, developmental stages and future learning needs. Babies experience a rich variety of stimulating experiences which excite and captivate them such as messy play, for example, using cornflour, baked beans and jelly, and cooking such as cakes, pizza and iced biscuits. They also enjoy art and craft activities such as finger painting, printing, using chalks and extra activities including use of the treasure basket, playing with balloons, shredded paper and bubbles and water play. Members of staff have competent knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use this to guide their practice. Babies and young children thrive at the nursery, developing competence, creativity and social confidence.

Children behave well and demonstrate a strong sense of belonging. They become confident and self-assured in their play, negotiating and interacting with their peers to share ideas and experiences. Children play together harmoniously, cooperating and offering their own suggestions, for example, within the well-resourced role play area. Resources are used creatively and imaginatively and children take pleasure in acting out adult roles such as 'mum and dad', 'doctors and nurses' and 'policemen'. Children develop self-esteem and take pride in their achievements as they take work home to parents and their artwork is displayed on the nursery

walls. Although children are encouraged to take responsibility for simple tasks such as laying the table and pouring their own drinks, this is inconsistent. As a result children's independence is not consistently promoted through everyday activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. An effective balance of adult-led and child-initiated play ensures that children are motivated and engaged in a broad variety of developmentally appropriate activities. Adult-led activities introduce children to new experiences and help them gain new skills. Teaching styles are varied and children have a positive attitude to learning and make good progress. Members of staff use successful strategies to interest children, for example, during talk and story times, whereby children maintain attention, concentrate and share matters of interest to them. Members of staff join in with activities and children's play and learning is enhanced by their interaction. Activities are adapted to provide realistic challenge for older and more able children.

Members of staff use their secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage to create a stimulating environment. Child profiles are completed and members of staff value children's previous learning and effectively build on their existing skills. Planning is based on topics, is balanced across the six areas of learning and is linked to appropriate stepping stones. Assessment is based upon meaningful observations, children's own work and anecdotal evidence. The information is recorded in children's records of progress and members of staff consider children's next steps in learning. However, this is collated on a half-termly basis and as a result children's individual educational needs are not always promptly identified. Current themes are incorporated into everyday activities and topics are revisited regularly to reinforce children's learning. Members of staff are well deployed and create an inviting environment, which is organised to help children become independent.

Children are confident communicators and express their ideas well, using a broad range of vocabulary. They hold pencils correctly and show good hand-eye coordination. Children see lots of letters and words around the nursery, helping them to understand that print has a meaning. Members of staff use lots of expression and gestures when talking to children and together they chat excitedly about their experiences. Members of staff are skilled at pointing out initial sounds in words and children are beginning to understand that letters represent some of these sounds. Throughout the day, members of staff ask questions to the children to extend their thinking.

Children use mathematical language during their play and often rehearse their counting skills. They exchange money in 'The Garden Centre, using coins to pay the 'shopkeeper'. Before mealtimes, children count as small groups are taken to wash their hands, using addition and subtraction and applying problem-solving skills. Through different topics, they develop knowledge of shapes, position, size and quantity. When they are playing with dough children discuss texture, measurement and quantity. Children grow sunflowers and they talk about colour, size and make comparisons, promoting their mathematical development. They experiment with spoons, pipes and sieves during sand play and use magnetic numbers on a whiteboard. Children's mathematical language and thinking is very well supported.

Planned activities also enable children to develop curiosity, notice changes that occur and grasp early concepts of science, for example, growing flowers and tomato plants in the nursery garden and cooking. Children investigate aspects of the living world with all of their senses; on nature walks they collect pine cones, acorns, conkers and other items of interest. They place them in

trays and use magnifying glasses to explore size, colour, shape and texture. Children classify different seeds, encouraging their matching and sorting abilities and they plant beans in jars. Children enjoy watching the beans grow and making observational drawings.

Children are creative and enjoy exploring a variety of materials. They make models out of tubs, tubes, textured paper, bottles and paint. Children take pleasure in messy play and have fun sculpting with clay and using glue. They use sponges, glitter, stickers, plastic bottle tops, shells, beads, dry pasta shapes, lentils, elastic bands and feathers to create interesting, colourful pictures. They are imaginative and take pleasure using the home-corner. Children's creative development is extended through stories, role-play and artwork and they express their ideas and feelings positively and constructively.

The playschool makes effective use of the outdoor area and there is a wide range of apparatus to enable children to develop physical skills. They extend their fine motor skills through carefully structured activities and a wide range of good quality tools such as scissors, pencils, brushes and clay utensils. Children use their time purposefully, accomplish new skills and flourish at the nursery.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are unquestionably valued because members of staff ensure, through regular discussion and precise written information from parents, that they are fully aware of the level of care each child requires. Professional, friendly and open relationships with parents ensure optimum continuity of care. Members of staff recognise that children have specific needs and different personalities and children are treated as individuals, with equal concern. Staff are dedicated to providing an all-inclusive environment. They have an excellent practical awareness of how to include and appropriately care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children benefit from a calm and sympathetic approach and learn right from wrong through careful explanation, reasoning and consistency. They understand responsible behaviour and respect the needs of others. Significant levels of praise and support helps children to develop self-esteem and members of staff talk to the children, acknowledge their feelings and work with them to find constructive solutions. Children are encouraged to play together, take turns and share. They enjoy being with familiar and trusted others and acquire substantial social confidence.

Through discussions, observations and the celebration of festivals, children develop considerable awareness of the wider world and the diversity of adults and children. They are aware of similarities and differences and relate extremely well to each other. This is supported in their play as there are extensive, wide-ranging resources to help them learn about a diverse society. Children make choices about their care and play activities, which promotes their self-confidence and enables them to feel valued and included. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Children's development is promoted through strong, positive working relationships with parents. Parents' views about their child's needs and interests are sought before they join the nursery and these are used to help settle them. New parents receive a pack containing the nursery's prospectus and copies of the policies and procedures. Parents are regularly invited along to prearranged parent evenings so that they

can see what their child is doing, access their records and discuss progress. They are well informed with information about the Foundation Stage and how their children are working towards the early learning goals. This is in addition to the daily exchanges of information with staff, regular newsletters, displays and notices to ensure that parents are kept fully aware of their children's learning while at the nursery. Members of staff recognise that their relationship with parents is key to the children's well-being, development and progress. Comments from parents illustrate that they value the quality of care and education their children receive and feel fully included in their children's development.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children play and learn in a setting where the staff's top priority is the children's good health, learning, safety and enjoyment. Rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures ensure all staff are suitable to have regular contact with young children. This ensures children's welfare is maintained. Members of staff offer warm and consistent care. They are deployed effectively, have a clear understanding of their roles and an unmistakable sense of purpose. Children are nurtured as they are happy, unreservedly safe and comfortable.

Space and resources are used creatively and effectively to ensure that children have a stimulating day. The free flow structure of the sessions allows children the time and space to initiate and extend their own learning. They benefit from the systematic organisation of the setting. Accurate and precise policies and procedures underpin the practice in all areas and are implemented consistently by members of staff. Regular staff meetings ensure the outcomes for all children are promoted exceptionally well. Cohesive records are kept, shared with parents and retained for inspection.

Leadership and management is outstanding. The management team has a clear commitment to training and development to ensure children receive high quality care and nursery education. The management team are able to identify strengths and weaknesses and take dynamic action to improve and develop. The proprietor demonstrates high levels of professionalism, is confident in her vision for the service she provides and pays intricate attention to detail. She is highly motivated and has fostered prolific links with schools and other external agencies to maximise her practice. Staff are innovative, highly motivated and work successfully as a team. This ensures the quality of teaching and learning is consistently high for all children. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

A the last inspection, the provider was asked to display fire drills around the setting. A comprehensive written fire drill has been devised and is displayed frequently around the nursery.

The provider was also asked to improve the sharing of information with parents. Parents are provided with a prospectus at registration which includes details about how the nursery operates, the Foundation Stage, areas of learning, a 'Birth to three matters' framework overview and copies of all policies and procedures. There is a welcoming reception area providing parents with the staff structure, useful information leaflets, nursery action plans, photograph albums and a suggestion box. In addition, there are notice boards located outside each playroom with further information such as weekly plans, keyworker details and first aid certificates.

In relation to nursery education, parents are well informed with information about the Foundation Stage and how their children are working towards the early learning goals. Information is disseminated through newsletters and an outline of the forthcoming topics is displayed on the notice board. Parents are invited into the nursery to discuss progress with their child's keyworker and learning is facilitated at home through the use of activity sheets. The nursery provides a wealth of good-quality information and works in partnership with parents to meet the needs of the children.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by the 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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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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 encourage children to be confident, independent and develop their self-esteem

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):

- ensure that observations and assessments are used routinely to help plan appropriate activities for the next steps in children's development and learning.

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