

Windmill Hill Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	218515
Inspection date	02 October 2007
Inspector	Lynne Milligan
Setting Address	Windmill Hill House, Windmill Hill, Rough Close, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST3 7PR
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Registered person	Samantha Brian and Scott Brian
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 satisfactory. 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?

Windmill Hill Day Nursery opened in 1984. It operates from a detached house in Rough Close, Stoke-On-Trent. Windmill Hill Nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 75 children aged between six weeks and eight years on roll. This includes 14 funded three-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery opens five days a week, all year round. Sessions are from 07:30 until 18:00.

There are 14 staff who work with the children. All staff have Early Years qualifications Level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to develop an understanding of personal health and hygiene practices, as these are sometimes promoted by staff throughout the day. For instance, some of the older children know when to wash their hands and why. Babies however, do not have the opportunity to wash their hands after having their nappy changed and this compromises their health.

Children are generally protected from the spread of infection due to most procedures followed by staff.

Records for administering medication are accurate and completed as required by the nursery's procedure for administration of medication, this promotes the sharing of information with parents. Staff have a sound understanding of exclusion periods should a child become ill whilst at the setting and are sensitive in their approach.

Children enjoy a balanced range of healthy and nutritious meals, that are prepared freshly on site. Children's individual dietary needs are well met and some children are beginning to understand the importance of eating a healthy balanced diet. Staff sometimes support the younger children in developing their independence, for example, by helping them learn to feed themselves. Children generally sit together at mealtimes and are beginning to socialise, chatting about their home life and interests. Children throughout the nursery have access to fresh drinking water at all times but opportunities for them to pour this themselves are limited. This hinders children's ability to learn new skills and become independent learners.

Children have opportunities to develop their large muscle skills, for example, throwing rubber hoops and skilfully manoeuvring around each other as they pedal their cars in the outside area. They enjoy their time outdoors when they can access a range of equipment which enables them to practise skills, such as climbing, peddling and crawling and also have use of a variety of equipment indoors. Children have access to fields that surround the nursery where they visit the sheep and collect leaves. Babies are also able to access the outside area, where they enjoy the fresh air and change of scenery. Children move around the nursery freely and confidently, negotiating space well. They learn why they need to put their coats on when going outside but some of the older children cannot manage this task on their own and staff help them with their zips. Children are beginning to use a good range of small equipment to increase their manipulative skills, such as scissors and pencils and are gaining in control and co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's safety is assured because staff are vigilant at all times; they complete risk assessments and visual checks on the building and outdoor play areas before the children arrive. The premises are generally kept secure but access to the side of the building where sleeping babies are placed is not safe. This results in children's safety being compromised. All visitors have to sign in and out of the building keeping children safe. Children are developing their awareness of safety through practising emergency evacuations. Fire notices are clearly displayed around the building to keep staff, students and visitors aware of the procedure to follow. Children are given sensitive reminders about keeping safe. For example, not to run indoors as they may hurt themselves or others, and to slow down whilst whizzing around on the pedal cars outside.

Children access a clean and well-maintained play and learning environment where some of their work is displayed on the walls, valuing their efforts. Children benefit from a suitable range of age-appropriate toys and resources, however, most of these are not used effectively to provide a broad range of interesting activities. In the under three's rooms the resources are mainly stored either in large cupboards or in boxes that are too high up for children to access easily. Consequently this prevents children from fully developing their independence and limits their ability to make choices and explore their environment.

Children are protected during their time at the nursery because staff have a sound knowledge of their responsibilities and know how to implement the local child protection procedures. Through discussion, staff are able to demonstrate that they could recognise the possible signs and symptoms of abuse, and would contact the relevant agencies as necessary to protect the children. A child protection policy is in place which demonstrates the procedure to follow should a member of staff be concerned about a child, but does not include the procedure should an allegation be made against the manager. Injuries that children arrive with are recorded, along with any incidents that happen at the nursery, however these are not consistently signed by parents, impacting on children's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery, they arrive happy and are keen to join in the activities, through their familiarity with the consistent routines and good relationships with one another and the staff. Babies and toddlers sufficiently benefit from the provision of a reasonable range of resources and activities, they build strong relationships with the staff and generally enjoy the range of activities and experiences offered to them. Staff are attentive and responsive to the younger children, talking to them and encouraging them to use their voices. Babies benefit from the interaction of staff, who spend time sitting and playing with them. However, opportunities for babies to crawl and roll are sometimes limited as staff have a tendency to do things for them rather than encouraging children's independence by allowing them to reach and grasp at toys.

Most children benefit from the resources and a wide range of toys and equipment that are set out each day. They have opportunities to enjoy sensory experiences. Babies and toddlers explore sound and texture with toys such as activity centres and natural materials. The 'Birth to three matters' framework is used sufficiently to plan activities to support younger children's development but staff lack the confidence to assess children's progress and this results in a limited understanding of how to plan for children's next steps. Children are beginning to make positive relationships with staff and each other when playing or sitting together at mealtimes. Their individual needs are incorporated into the daily routines well, so they have time for rest, sleep and play.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is a new staff team providing the nursery education for the children and they are working together to develop new systems to monitor progress and develop planning. They currently plan a varied programme with a choice of activities that cover the areas of learning around a termly theme. Activities include mini beasts, free painting, animal farm and compare bears. Adult-focused activities such as food tasting are included each day which demonstrate the learning intention such as children's ability to smell, taste, feel and describe what they see. However, due to the lack of experience and knowledge

of the Foundation Stage not all staff are aware of how the learning intention will inform future planning or how to adapt the activity so that all children are challenged. The staff make sure children have time to play freely and create their own games but some children spend much of their time moving from one activity to another. This is partly due to staff not extending child-initiated play in order to bring in other areas of the curriculum. Staff monitor what children can do, using formal observations to measure children's progress. Although the aim of the activity is clear on the observation records, staff rarely record ideas about developing the activity to plan children's next steps. The expectation that children will learn from the same activity means that staff do not routinely tailor learning to suit those who attend and ensure all reach their full potential.

All children separate confidently from their parent's or carer's, keep themselves well occupied, and make friends easily. They willingly help with routine tasks, such as clearing away, but staff have a tendency to do things for the children rather than encouraging children's independence before offering help if needed. The children show an interest in the things around them and freely join in conversations to add their opinion. The children listen well and follow instructions confidently. They enjoy books as they sit with each other talking about the pictures they see. Children are skilful at linking letter sounds as staff ask them what animal begins with the letter 'b' as they stick felt letters onto their pictures. The children say 'b' for bird and then talk about the feathers they are using, chatting about where they come from. Mark-making is practised regularly but this is often through the use of worksheets which limits the development of more able children. Writing materials are plentiful but opportunities to encourage children to use them in meaningful play situations such as in the role play area are not promoted thoroughly. Children self-register as they enter the room, placing their named pictures into their groups. However, scope to attempt to write their name in other contexts is sparse as staff write it on their paintings and on their mats for their cups at snack and mealtimes.

Children routinely use low numbers in conversation throughout the day, talking about how old they are and how many children should be in the role play area. Some of the more able children recognise numbers and correctly identify right from wrong as they count on the number line. One child says 'that is number five', 'no it's number three' says the other child, 'that's number five' as he points to the correct number hanging up. Staff praise children's achievements to give encouragement and raise their self-esteem. Children learn about colour and shape as they carefully place their favourite coloured pegs onto the board. They decide to make a cake, confirming that the square board does not stop them from making a circle. They are also developing an awareness of size as they use the tape measures to see who is the tallest and who is the shortest. Children talk about colours as they mix red and blue between their fingers, confidently stating that it is now 'purple' and laughing as the paint oozes through their fingers. Children are also developing an awareness of size as they measure each other using the measuring tapes to see who is the biggest and who is the smallest.

The children benefit from a suitable range of activities in order to learn about modern life and the local community. Although the nursery does not take children on outings, they have the opportunity to explore their environment through good resources and well planned activities. These include observing the sheep in the surrounding fields, talking about the caterpillar that has developed into a cocoon and learning more about different festivals such as Chinese New Year and Eid. The children have access to tools for construction, doctors kits with stethoscopes and a hairdressers box with a hairdryer, empty shampoo bottles and a shower attachment. Children also utilise the computer area well as they sit and match fruit into pairs and choose colours to fill in their pictures. They are confident at using the mouse as they click and drag the colours across the screen.

Children's physical development is sufficiently promoted. They use the outdoor area well, moving around at speed with full control over their movements. Some scoot around to practise changing speed and direction, while others throw and catch balls. Children enjoy rolling dough and shaping it to create models. They make models out of cereal boxes and create collages using felt letters and feathers. Staff sometimes select the equipment for the activities rather than encourage children to choose for themselves and learning is fairly formal. As a result, some choose not to join in adult-led learning and engross themselves in an activity of their choice for extended periods, with few challenges.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are looked after in an environment where they are valued, treated with respect and equal concern. Children settle well into the nursery; they are secure and familiar with the daily routines. Children with identified special needs are well supported by staff, to ensure they are fully supported. Children behave well in the calm and caring environment; their individual contributions are valued and they receive regular praise and encouragement from staff. Children's self-esteem is further promoted as staff complete 'magic moment' cards that highlight specific achievements which are then shared with the parents. Children develop a sense of community and a positive understanding and appreciation of different cultures through a good range of activities. Parents of babies and young children feel that they are kept well informed of their child's daily experiences and routines through daily diaries and informal chats as they collect their children.

Partnership with parents with regard to the provision of nursery education is good. Parents are welcomed to participate in their child's learning and this is valued by the nursery. Children's development files are freely available for parents to view. Parents' meetings provide planned opportunities for parents to view these folders and discuss them with their child's key worker. Parents may speak to staff each day about their child's welfare and learning. This enhances children's learning and experience.

The nursery generally provides parents with useful information about the curriculum. Planning for the Foundation Stage is displayed on the entrance to the pre-school and includes details of the topic for that term. In addition, parents are encouraged to provide resources in relation to the topic and this enables them to become more involved in their child's learning. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The children settle well, playing together and making friends easily. They spend their day in clean surroundings, which are generally safe and suitable for their needs. Staff address most aspects of health and safety effectively, but some of the documentation lacks the detail needed to be of full value and eliminate risks. Policies and paperwork are adequately organised. The leadership and management of the provision are satisfactory. The provider has secure recruitment and appraisal systems in place to ensure staff are well suited to do their job, and the staff team works well together. All staff are dedicated to raising standards and regularly contribute ideas on how to improve. Ongoing monitoring is currently under review for all aspects of the setting, in order to fully identify and address areas of weakness.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the provider was required to improve in two areas. The first was to amend the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. A new policy has now been drawn up that includes the details of what is to be done should an allegation be made against a member of staff. However, this does not include the procedure should an allegation be made against the manager. Therefore a new recommendation has been made. Finally the setting was required to ensure there was a written procedure for lost children. The setting has updated its policies to include this and staff are aware of the procedure should a child become lost in their care. This results in children's welfare being promoted.

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

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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):

- review aspects of safety with regard to babies that are sleeping in prams outside in relation to access at the side of the building
- improve documentation to include procedures should an allegation or complaint be made against the manager
- improve the organisation of the toys for the younger children in order that they have the opportunity to independently self-select from a suitable range of resources and activities
- encourage children's independence by developing their self help skills with regard to pouring drinks and hand washing.

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):

- further improve knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage in order to plan and promote children's next steps and to provide opportunities for children to be challenged through problem solving and prediction.

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