

Mrs Cameron Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY276052
Inspection date	07 December 2007
Inspector	Heidi Falconer
Setting Address	Gonville & Caius College, Flat 2 Springfield, Sidgewick Avenue, Cambridge, CB3 9DS
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Registered person	Wigwam Nurseries Ltd
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 Mrs Cameron Day Nursery is one of three nurseries run by Wigwam Nurseries Ltd. It opened in 1999 and operates from three inter-connected group rooms in a converted and extended house in the grounds of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. A maximum of 24 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.30 to 17.00 all year round. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 33 children aged from eight months to under five years on roll. Of these, 8 children receive funding for early education. Admissions priority is given to staff and fellows of the college and other institutions associated with Gonville and Caius College. The nursery employs nine members of staff who all hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted through the provision of wholesome, nutritious and balanced meals. These are prepared daily by caterers at the university using fresh vegetables and organic meat. Children enjoy meals such as pasta with a tomato and basil sauce served with green beans and asparagus. Menus are displayed to give parents information about the meal choices. Each day these include alternative meals for children who follow a vegetarian diet or who have a dairy intolerance. Practitioners have a very good understanding of each child's individual dietary needs and they liaise closely with the caterers to ensure that these are met.

Children are learning about the steps they can take to keep themselves healthy. They brush their teeth after meals and wash their hands after playing in the garden and before eating. Children say 'we need to wash our hands because they are disgusting and we need to wash the germs away so we don't get poorly'.

There are effective procedures in place to sustain good levels of hygiene and prevent the spread of infection throughout the nursery. For example, practitioners wear disposable gloves and aprons for nappy changing and sanitise the changing area after each use. All practitioners have attended training in first aid and food hygiene. As a result, they implement and consistently follow procedures which ensure that children's good health is maintained. For example, accurate records are kept of accidents and medication which is administered.

Children make good progress in their physical development. Practitioners provide plenty of opportunities for physical play through well-planned indoor and outdoor activities. In addition to playing outside, young children enjoy regular walks around the university grounds. The provision of a carriage ensures that even the youngest children at the nursery have regular opportunities to go outside. Older children demonstrate good spatial awareness, taking care not to bump into each other during music and movement sessions. Resources and activities are provided to help children develop the skills to climb, run, jump, skip, hop, crawl, catch, throw and balance. As children thread collage materials such as straws, paper and card they develop their small muscle control and hand-eye co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safeguarded because the practitioners caring for them have a good understanding of the local procedures they must follow should a concern arise. All practitioners at the setting are required by the provider to attend basic child protection training to ensure that they understand how they can protect children. The designated child protection co-ordinators have attended more in depth training and in addition, are aware of the procedures they would follow if an allegation was made against a member of staff.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe through activities and discussions with staff. For example, the older children have recently drawn 'safety circles'. This activity helps them to think about the adults who they feel safe with. Overall, good security and safety precautions are in place to keep children safe. For example, the entrance area is gated and the front door is alarmed which instantly alerts staff that it has been opened. However, a low shelf over the computer has not been assessed and potentially poses a risk to children.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained and inviting environment. They use a wide range of good quality resources. New storage units are in place which ensures that these resources are well organised in child-height furniture. This encourages children to access them independently. However, there are a limited amount of beds provided for rest and sleep times. As a result, the majority of children sleep harnessed in pushchairs which restricts their movement and overall comfort.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children thoroughly enjoy their time at the nursery and take part in a wide range of activities which stimulate them. Children particularly enjoy outdoor play on rainy days. As they put on their raincoats and all in one suits they talk excitedly about what they are going to do saying 'I'm going to splash in the puddles' and 'I'm going to dig in the mud'. As they run down the slope they splash into puddles saying 'we like jumping in the big puddles'. Other children are keen to use spades and trowels to dig in the mud and make mud pies. Children between the ages of two and three enjoy exploring different malleable materials. For example, as they play with gloop, cornflour and water mixture, they concentrate as they spoon the mixture into pots and let it run through their fingers. Staff are always close by as children play and ask them questions to encourage them to talk about their experiences. Children tell staff that the gloop 'feels funny and cold'. Practitioners make good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan a wide programme of activities for the children.

Children of all ages have developed strong bonds with the practitioners who care for them. This increases their sense of well-being and enjoyment at the nursery. Babies take part in a good range of activities such as messy play with flour, jelly, rice pudding, gloop, water and ice. They also enjoy using the nursery's 'Treasure Basket'. This basket gathers together a selection of everyday objects which have been chosen to stimulate the senses. For example, children rustle metal chains and stroke lengths of material. Children under the age of two show an impulse to communicate with staff. They respond with giggles and coos as staff spontaneously sing songs to them as they play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Practitioners have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They use this knowledge to plan and provide a broad range of interesting play and learning opportunities. Planning is regularly evaluated to ensure that the activities continue to interest the children and extend their learning. Assessments of children's progress are kept and staff use their knowledge of individual children's progress to extend their learning in activities. Staff use time and resources well to allow children time to pursue their own interests as well as involving them in group activities.

Children have many opportunities throughout the day to use mathematics in planned and unplanned activities. Number songs and rhymes help them to understand number and operations like simple addition and subtraction. For example, in songs such as 'five green bottles' they subtract the number of bottles using props. Children are beginning to recognise numerals and use mathematical language in context. For example, as practitioners remind them that it is four minutes till tidy-up time the children point to the number four on a clock and say 'that says four minutes'.

Practitioners make good use of phonics to reinforce the initial letters of words to help children to link sounds and letters. For example, as they twist the stalk of an apple at snack time the children say the alphabet. On the letter that the stalk twists off they suggest words that begin with that letter such 'j' for 'jam'. Children enjoy stories. They listen well and practitioners engage the children by asking them to suggest what may come next. In response children confidently recall parts of familiar stories and predict storylines.

Regular music and movement sessions involve listening to sounds and repeating rhythms. For instance, children enjoy taking turns to lead the group playing instruments. They use hand signals to conduct the others to play the music loudly, quietly, slowly or quickly. Children have daily opportunities to develop their imaginative play through role play. Currently children enjoy dressing-up in white gowns and tinsel pretending to be angels as part of the Christmas theme. Children are able to express themselves creatively through different types of media. Paint, paper, glue and pencils are available for children to use freely.

Children find out about and identify living things. In addition to caring for the nursery's mice 'sleepy and patchy', each year they grow carrots, potatoes, beans, strawberries and herbs. Children are curious to investigate how things work. As they press the nose of a musical Father Christmas they turn it around and say 'there are batteries in that, which make it work'. Practitioners have recently started to allow the children to freely select activities and resources during each session. This promotes their independent learning and decision making skills. Children are confident and independent, taking themselves to the toilet, brushing their teeth and changing into outdoor shoes to play outside.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Older children are beginning to distinguish between right and wrong. As they look at a poster of children playing in a classroom practitioners ask them to talk about what they can see. Children say 'look they are snatching, that's not a nice thing to do'. Practitioners respond by asking them what the child should have done. They reply 'they should have said please can I have that'. Practitioners are skilled at managing behaviour and successfully are able to maintain children's interest in group sessions. As a result, children's behaviour is good.

A good range of activities and resources are provided to give children appropriate opportunities to experience different cultures and learn about the needs of others. Children take part in events to celebrate festivals such as Diwali, Hanukah and Christmas. The nursery places a strong emphasis on celebrating the festivals which children celebrate at home. Parents are invited to come in and cook traditional foods with the children. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Good procedures are in place to support children who may attend who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. To support children who speak English as an additional language practitioners take time to learn familiar words in the children's home language.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive generally good information about the day-to-day organisation of the nursery and the Foundation Stage and how it is implemented. For example, planning is displayed prominently and parents are asked to bring in objects from home to support topics. This enables parents to be involved in their children's learning both at the nursery and at home. However, there are fewer opportunities for parents to view their children's assessment records and add what they know about their children's progress. Parents of the younger children and babies receive verbal feedback from practitioners about their

children's day. All children benefit from the good relationships and informal contact between their parents and staff.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children in the nursery are cared for in a well-organised environment. They receive good support through effective staff deployment. For example, to develop children's sense of security the key worker system has recently been reviewed. As a result, the number of carers who are involved in children's key times such as nappy changing is minimised. Children benefit from having committed, experienced staff who work well as a team and consistently implement the setting's policies, procedures and daily routines. Many have been employed since the nursery opened and continually strive to maintain high levels of care and education. Comprehensive and effective recruitment and induction procedures are in place to ensure children are cared for by suitable staff who are appropriately vetted. All the essential regulatory documentation that supports children's care and welfare running is in place. Confidentiality is observed and information about the children is stored securely. Overall, children's needs are met.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The management team offer good support to the staff and act as positive role models as they work alongside them in the rooms. Practitioners monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum by evaluating activities and planning. As a result, the management team has identified minor weaknesses in the provision for nursery education and is taking action to improve. For example, they are currently looking at ways to further encourage the children to select resources for themselves. Appraisals are currently being undertaken to identify training needs. The management team actively encourages staff to attend training to extend professional development.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to ensure that children have further opportunities to initiate their own creative activities and ideas. A good range of tools and materials are now freely accessible to the children. This allows them to freely interpret their creative ideas. The nursery was also asked to ensure that the complaints procedure includes the telephone number of Ofsted. This policy has since been updated and supports the setting's partnership with parents.

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):

- ensure that the shelf above the computer in the pre-school room does not pose a risk to children
- provide appropriate beds and cots for children who require a sleep or rest.

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):

- extend opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning, with particular regard to having regular opportunities to see their child's assessment records and sharing what they know about their child's learning
- continue to extend opportunities for children to self-select activities and resources, providing them with more opportunities to extend their own 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