

Smiles

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY268321
Inspection date	18 October 2007
Inspector	Emily Alderson
Setting Address	6-8 Queen Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 2PJ
Telephone number	01206 366900
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Registered person	Smiles
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Smiles Daycare is a private day nursery. It opened in 2003 and operates from rooms above shops in Colchester town centre. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open five days a week 51 weeks of the year from 08:00 to 18:00. Children attend on a flexible basis while their parents are either at work, shopping, studying or for emergency care. Occasional out of school care is also offered. There is no outside playing area.

There are currently 80 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll. Of these, 16 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The nursery currently supports a small number of children who speak English as an additional language and children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs eight staff. Four of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children attend a setting which has good health and hygiene practices as all staff have attended food hygiene training and are able to follow the correct procedures. Staff minimise cross-infection whilst preparing snacks as they wash their hands, wear aprons and use different chopping boards for the different food prepared. Food is correctly stored in the fridge and in the cupboards. Children bring their own lunch in lunch boxes which are stored in the fridge. The fridge temperature is recorded daily to ensure it remains at a suitable temperature. Toilet and nappy changing facilities are good and nappies are hygienically disposed. Children learn to understand simple good health and living as they understand the need to wash their hands prior to eating and after toileting.

Children receive good care when they are ill or have had an accident because all staff are trained in first aid. In addition, the setting has four well equipped first aid boxes. Should children have an accident they are well cared for and their accident is recorded in the settings' accident book. Parents give prior written permission for staff to administer medicine, any given is recorded in the book and shared with parents. Parents also give written permission for staff to seek emergency medical help however, this consent does not completely cover situations when the setting may need to seek both emergency medical advice and treatment. Consequently, children's well-being in a medical emergency is potentially compromised. If children are unwell parents are contacted and asked to collect. They are advised of the length of time they should keep the children at home via the settings' policy and the communicable disease chart.

Children's physical play experiences are well promoted because the setting ensure that children are given plenty of opportunity for physical exercise. Staff join in with exercises where children are encouraged to star jump, march and touch their toes. Although the setting does not have a garden children's physical needs are well catered for as they are given ample opportunities for fresh air. The setting take the children out daily to the local park so that they can enjoy the parks' facilities and to the local library as well as other local places of interest. Each room within the setting has a range of equipment to promote physical play. Children access them everyday and the resources include a slide, trampoline, bikes, scooters and balls. Space is cleared in the room to allow the children the space to practise their skills using the equipment provided. They move their bodies in different ways confidently pedalling on the bike, enjoying crawling through the tunnel and jumping on the trampoline. They are very aware of the space around them as they carefully use the equipment not bumping into one another. Children effectively use small equipment such as paintbrushes, pencils, glue sticks and scissors demonstrating their hand and eye co-ordination.

Children have their health and dietary needs well met and increase their understanding of healthy living as the setting provide the children with healthy nutritious foods. Children can freely access water during the day and are provided with milk, squash and water at snack time. Snack compromises of foods such as a range of fresh fruit, vegetables, crumpets or toast. All staff are very aware of children's' food allergies and dietary needs as they are displayed clearly on a sheet in the kitchen. Parents are notified of what their children have eaten via the menu displayed on the notice board. Food provided is according to parents' wishes as detailed on the registration form.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The environment is very warm and welcoming for children, staff, parent and carers because staff make it an inviting setting for all children. The walls are brightly decorated with children's art work and posters. The space is well organised and is separated into a main play area for the pre-school age children, a two to three room and a baby room giving each group their own area. In addition, there are toilet facilities, a kitchen and an office. The rooms are very well sectioned into different activity areas and include a writing corner, messy area, dressing up, book area amongst others. All resources are stored in low-level boxes so that children can make choices about what they want to play with helping themselves to the resources. Children use very safe, suitable toys and equipment. The toys are regularly checked and cleaned weekly, anything deemed unsuitable is removed. There is a good range of resources catering for the wide range of ages and abilities of the children who attend.

The settings arrangements meet health and safety guidelines because the staff assess the hazards and actively take steps to minimise the risks. The setting carry out daily, weekly and monthly risk assessments. The daily checks include checking the floors for cleanliness, ensuring that the food preparation area is clean and that the toilets are clean and tidy. Children are safe at the setting and cannot leave unattended as the front door is locked. The setting has a very good system to manage entry into the setting with a bell and a monitor so that staff can see who is at the door prior to allowing them entry. Only trained staff are allowed to attend to the door to ensure that only adults known to them enter. The setting asks parents to complete an 'alternative person sheet' if someone other than the named people are collecting their child. The person is given a password and shows identification to gain entry. In the event of a fire children are very well protected as the setting has a well thought out written procedure in place. Precautions are taken with smoke alarms fitted and tested as part of the daily risk assessment, a fire blanket and extinguisher are readily available in the kitchen and the fire exits are clearly labelled.

Children are very safe on outings because staff prior to taking the children conduct a risk assessment of the route and the location of the outing. All staff carry a mobile phone and a first aid kit. Staff complete a sheet detailing how many children, how many staff, where they are going and the time they are expected to return. All children wear florescent vests and appropriate harnesses are used. Younger children are in pushchairs or wearing reins and older children walk sensibly with the staff. Should children attend an outing other than in the local area parents are informed via a letter and consent to their children using public transport. Children are learning to keep themselves safe as staff regularly discuss road safety with them as they regularly are out on walks. Children understand how to use the pelican crossing and patiently wait for the green man to appear. Children are well protected because staff understand their role in safeguarding children. There is a nominated person who has completed the training along with two other members of staff. They have clear procedures in place which all staff are able to put into practice when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to be confident and develop their independence by the welcoming staff at the setting. The children feel safe in the environment and are clearly settled. Each child is assigned a key worker to encourage them to form special relationships with them further helping the settling in process. Staff offer children lots of valuable praise which helps them to

develop their confidence and attempt new activities with the support and guidance of staff. For example, in the baby room a child was trying to walk through one of the tunnels and could not understand why she could not fit through. The staff member demonstrated that she needed to crawl as she was too tall the child followed her through and repeated it showing her understanding. Children show an active interest in their activities when they are provided with fun and meaningful activities. The room layout enables all children to choose and be fully involved in their play. The baby room's displays are at a low-level so that children can touch them exploring the different textures and there are mirrors so children can see themselves. Children participate in a wide range of activities such as cutting and sticking, cooking and constructing amongst many others. They are very engaged in their chosen activity as they are able to make choices about what they want to play with changing when they feel they want to. Staff join in with the children's play and get down to their level. The staff continuously talk to the children helping them to form very positive relationships. Children often approach them for cuddles and ask the staff to play with them. Children under three years of age are given many good opportunities to learn and develop their skills. Activities provided are in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Each child has a birth to three profile where observations of their achievements are noted in order to plan activities to advance their learning.

The Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff responsible for planning the Foundation Stage have a sound knowledge and understanding of it. Activities are planned to cover the six areas of learning and the stepping stones are identified on the medium term plan. Short term plans identify a theme which is currently 'home and family' it shows the six areas of learning, the associated stepping stones, the activity, vocabulary to use and differentiation. Activities are selected by the staff and are used to meet the identified stepping stone, so therefore children's interest are not fully taken into consideration when planning. In addition, the setting has a resources sheet which acts as a guide to staff so that they know which resources they should prepare for the children to access. Children's starting points are identified only through staff observation. Whilst one member of staff carries out the adult focussed activity with the children the other staff member completes the evaluation sheet. Individual observations are made about each of the children participating, these are then transferred into their individual profiles and linked to the specific stepping stone. Although the profiles are regularly completed the information is not used to plan future activities and therefore is not used to identify the next steps in individual children's learning. In addition to the profile staff write an informative report each term under the six areas of learning and share it with parents. Staff use the resources to meet the needs of the children and use open ended questions to engage them in conversations. The staff sit with the children so that they are able guide and support their learning. Children observe the staff as they act as positive role models when trying new activities.

Children are progressing through the stepping stones in relation to their starting points. They are confident and some children are able to concentrate on an activity for quite some time. Children increase their self-esteem by making choices about their preferred activity and what they eat and drink at snack times. Children have formed sound relationships with the staff at the setting and with other children. They are learning to take turns, for example, when riding the new bikes children are given a ticket whilst it is their turn and pass it on to another child when their turn has finished demonstrating their understanding of turn taking. Children communicate to each other using a range of vocabulary and confidently ask questions to learn using lots of why, what and how words. They use language to direct their play explaining to each other what they are doing especially during imaginative play. For example, a group of children pretend to be 'spiderman' and 'power rangers' they discuss who will be who and what

they should do. Some children can link sounds to letters with one child saying 'S is for Sam'. Children really enjoy looking at books turning the pages one by one making up the story as they look at the pictures. Children enjoy accessing the writing table which is equipped with a range of resources and also enjoy painting at the easel making different marks with the paint.

Children's mathematical skills are developing as they confidently count using numbers in the correct order. They are able to say how old they are when asked and some can say how old they will be at their next birthday demonstrating an awareness of numbers and calculations. They use simple calculations during singing games such as 'five little ducks' where they deduct numbers counting from five to zero. Children freely use positional language during their play such as above and under and in-front of and behind. Children enjoy exploring the texture of play dough, they like cooking watching the mixture change as the different ingredients are added. They enjoy constructing using marble runs to make different models then experimenting with the marbles watching to see how they roll down the runs. Children confidently access the computer table and enjoy using the spades and funnels in the sparkly sand. They talk about past events such as trips to the dentists showing an awareness of time. Children often participate in creative activities using scissors, paints, glue and other materials to make pictures. They regularly engage in music and movement joining in with familiar songs such as 'here we go round the mulberry bush' joining in with the actions. Children enjoy using their imaginations for example, one child puts the play dough in a saucepan pretending to cook.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are all included and their differences acknowledged because children are given the opportunity to share their experiences during group discussions and one to one time spent with staff. Children's work is displayed in the setting which helps children to feel proud of their achievements raising their self-esteem. Children bring in toys from home to show the other children this helps them to feel a sense of belonging and helps them to settle. Children are in touch with the wider community as they are often out on walks meeting different people and seeing different places. Children learn about diversity through planned activities and discussions. Past activities include celebrating Divali, Christmas, Chinese New year amongst others. The setting have children attending from diverse backgrounds and value this by asking parents to contribute to the activities. Parents have brought in different foods to share with children and the staff often cook food from around the world. The resources positively support diversity and show positive images through books and displays in the setting.

The setting cares for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language. The setting has a special education needs co-ordinator whose responsibility is to observe the children, working closely with them to meet their needs. In addition, three other members of staff are also trained and therefore as a setting they feel confident in noticing if a child has any developmental issues. The setting works closely with the local authority for additional guidance and support. Some children understand appropriate behaviour through observing staff as they are positive role models. Children's behaviour is rewarded with stickers and certificates and the settings' 'golden rules' are displayed in the setting to act as a reminder. The setting has clear procedures in place however, staff are not consistent with their approach and subsequently children's behaviour is often challenging.

Children are cared for by staff who work with parents to meet their individual needs and ensure that the child is fully included in the setting. When children initially start at the setting parents are given a prospectus and asked to complete a registration form along with other paperwork

giving the setting vital information about their child. Children are offered two settling in visits where parents are encouraged to stay with their child to help them familiarise themselves with the setting. Younger children's parents are asked to complete a 'settling in form' which provides the setting with further information about their child for example, likes and dislikes, sleep times amongst other information. Parents consent to their children to have medicine administered, go on outings, and have photographs taken. Staff communicate verbally with parents on a daily basis and younger children have daily diaries which act as a two way means of communication.

Partnership with Parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are provided with information about the Foundation Stage through conversations with the staff. There are displays around the room which gives parents information about the different areas of learning. Newsletters and the notice board provides parents with information on the planned activities. Parents are encouraged to share what they know about their child through discussions with staff although they are not specifically asked to provide information about their child's starting points when they begin at the setting. Consequently, planning cannot be tailored to meet individual children's needs as these are unknown when the child begins. Parents are invited to speak to staff about their children's achievements and are able to view their child's profile whenever they wish too. The setting has formed positive relationships with the parents with some volunteering to help at sessions.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Children are developing their self-esteem, have formed positive relationships with staff and children, some children behave well and are developing an awareness of different cultures through discussions and planned activities.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are safe as they are cared for by individuals who have been vetted and are cared for by staff with a good knowledge and understanding of child development. Children are safe as there are robust procedures in place when recruiting staff to ensure that they are suitable to work in the setting. Children are well looked after as the setting has a good understanding of the National Standards and their responsibility to comply. The setting maintains the correct adult to child ratio and staff deploy themselves very well to benefit all children. The setting places great emphasis on training, all the staff have attended first aid and food hygiene training. In addition, individual staff members are trained in specific areas such as fire safety, promoting race and equality, dealing with feelings and behaviour management amongst many others. Any training completed is shared amongst all staff at team meetings so that everyone can benefit and use what they have learnt in practice.

Children's well-being is promoted by the well organised records and policies. The setting has a very professional operational plan in place providing the reader with a useful insight into the setting. An accurate daily register is maintained recording the times of arrival and departure of each child. Policies and procedures are in place and are mostly reflected in practice. Policies are shared with parents who can access them at the setting. Parents are asked to give the setting information about their child through completing a range of paperwork. These documents are stored accessibly and confidentially on the premises. Overall children's needs are met.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff are supported in their roles at the setting as they have an induction procedure in place, clear job description, regular team meetings and annual appraisals which all contribute to their professional development. Staff work as a team

they communicate throughout the day ensuring that tasks are completed and that they share information about the children. The setting regularly assesses its' strengths and areas for improvement. Staff are all involved in the process as each member is asked to contribute. They each complete a self-evaluation form which looks at the five outcomes for children and asks them to identify what they feel the strengths and areas for improvement are under each area. Their opinions are each valued as the owner amalgamates the responses to create one self-evaluation form for the setting. This demonstrates how reflective staff are encouraged to be and it is evident in the self-evaluation form which sets clear aims for the future.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to develop the use of observation and recording to plan the next steps in children's play, learning and development. Staff now observe children during planned activities and notes are now transferred into children's individual profile. However, the information is still not used to plan children's next steps in learning. The setting also agreed to ensure that hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing. Children use liquid soap and paper towels to wash their hands. The setting agreed to increase the opportunities for children to use sand, water and paint all of which are now readily available for children to freely access. The setting also agreed to obtain written permission from parents before administering medication to children and ensure that parents always sign the accident record. All parents provide written consent for medication to be administered and always sign both the medicine and accident book.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted received one complaint that related to National Standard 3: Care, learning and play. The complaint raised concerns about supervision, grouping of children and the recording of accidents and incidents. Ofsted conducted an announced visit to the premises and after discussion with the provider it resulted in the provider being set two actions under Standard 3. The first action was to review grouping of children and care arrangements to ensure that individual needs are met relating to safety. The second action was to ensure that toys and activities are suitable for children, appropriate for their stage in development and their individual needs. A satisfactory response to the action was received and Ofsted was satisfied that by taking these steps the provider remained qualified for registration.

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

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 satisfactory.

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 all staff are consistent in the approach to behaviour management
- request written parental permission for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future.

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):

- use observation and assessments made of children's progress to develop planning for the next step in their learning
- ensure children's interests are fully considered when planning activities
- use parents' knowledge of their child to support the learning opportunities provided by the setting.

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