

The Rowans Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY280509
Inspection date	10 March 2008
Inspector	Angela Dyer
Setting Address	74-76 Kings Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B73 5AE
Telephone number	0121 354 1752
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Registered person	The Rowans Day Nursery (4978690)
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?

The Rowans Nursery is a privately run nursery which has been established for 16 years and has been under new ownership since 2004. It operates from two converted buildings in a residential area of Sutton Coldfield. The nursery is open each weekday between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 and children can attend for a variety of sessions.

There are 12 playrooms and a maximum of 88 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 92 children from three months to under five years on roll. Of these, 31 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 29 staff, of whom over half have early years qualifications to NVQ Level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of a recognised quality assurance scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about positive hygiene practices through daily routines and regular discussions with staff. For example, whilst washing their hands children talked to each other and staff about their hands being dirty and needing to wash the germs away. Suitable procedures are in place to minimise the possible spread of infections, including staff using disposable gloves when changing nappies and children being provided with disposable tissues for cleaning their noses. However, staff do not always provide children with individual bedding which may result in children being at risk of cross-infections.

Children's health is maintained as staff administer medication appropriately, after gaining parental permission, and keep accurate records. A high number of staff are first aid qualified and have easy access to a first aid box in order to deal with any minor accidents quickly and effectively. However, although accidents are recorded they are not always signed by parents to acknowledge that they have been informed of the accident, therefore compromising children's health and well-being. Children have daily access to a large paved and grassed outside area where they benefit from regular physical play that helps to develop their muscles, co-ordination and confidence. Staff have created a stimulating outside environment where children are able to use larger climbing apparatus, ride bikes, play in the wooden house or jump on the enclosed trampoline.

Meals are freshly prepared on site by the nursery cooks with consideration given to both nutrition and meeting children's individual dietary requirements. Snack and meal times are sociable occasions where children are encouraged to use appropriate cutlery and learn social skills and table manners as they eat. All children within the nursery have access to drinks throughout the day to ensure they remain hydrated, with older children being able to help themselves to water from the drinks dispenser.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Parents and children are greeted on arrival by staff who have created a warm and welcoming environment for children to play and learn in. Staff have a good understanding of how to keep children safe and the nursery places emphasis on maintaining children's safety. All staff are vigilant and take action to minimise potential risks. Daily safety checks of all rooms are completed prior to children arriving and detailed risk assessments are completed of the environment, outings, the use of the setting's mini-bus, activities and resources used. The premises are secure and only authorised persons have entry, children are closely supervised when playing inside and outside to ensure their safety.

Children are developing an awareness of the importance of keeping themselves safe. Staff discuss fire safety with children and provide regular opportunities for them to practise the fire drill to enhance their understanding of what to do in an emergency. Fire exits are accessible for children to leave from safely and fire evacuation procedures are clear. Staff are clear of their responsibilities in evacuating the nursery and have given significant thought to the evacuation of babies on the first floor through the support of other staff and the use of evacuation cots.

Children are protected from harm because staff have a good understanding of child protection issues and are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities to protect the children in their care. There is a clear written policy in place, which is shared with parents. Staff know how to recognise the possible signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and are confident about when to put the appropriate procedures into practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident and settled in the nursery's welcoming environment. Children's artwork is displayed around the rooms and photographs of children are mounted at their height for them to look at and enjoy. Staff throughout the nursery interact appropriately with the children, involving themselves in their play. Babies enjoy the attention they receive from staff who sit at their level whilst playing. Younger children also enjoy creative activities including painting using spray bottles and decorating biscuits with icing sugar.

Children enjoy warm, positive relationships with staff who demonstrate a detailed knowledge of their needs, interests and personalities which helps them to nurture their individuality. Staff provide various play experiences for younger children and babies, demonstrating a satisfactory understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, however, children's play is sometimes hindered due to the limited range and amount of resources they are provided with. Children are allocated a key worker which promotes continuity of care and provides parents with a regular contact to discuss their child's progress with.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and children are making steady progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Staff have a reasonable understanding and knowledge of the Foundation Stage which is demonstrated in the planning and delivery of activities which cover the six areas of learning. Staff record and celebrate children's individual achievements and observations are transferred to children's assessment records to assist with future planning.

Within the pre-school area children are placed in key worker groups depending on their age and ability, however, for most of the day they are able to move between rooms and make decisions about what they would like to do and who they would like to play with. Within these times staff plan activities linked to the current theme, however, insufficient thought is given as to how the activities could be adapted to meet the needs of all children and extend children's learning. Staff plan a wide range of activities for both indoors and outdoors, however, during creative activities some staff become too focused on the end result rather than the learning process and therefore over direct activities hindering children's imagination and creativity. Consequently staff do not always make the most of activities in challenging and supporting children in developing new skills.

Children gain confidence in counting during daily situations such as counting children at registration and cups at snack time. Children are beginning to use mathematical vocabulary and language to describe position and talk about less and more than when solving simple mathematical problems. Children's physical skills develop and improve through accessing the outside environment daily where they are able to ride bikes, play on larger fixed equipment and use balls and other small equipment for group games. The setting also offers families

further opportunities for children to engage in physical activity through signing up to swimming lessons at the local swimming baths.

Children form good relationships with staff and each other. They understand that they are part of a group and are able to share and take turns. Children communicate effectively, listening to staff and regularly initiating conversation. Children show an interest in books and poetry and have opportunities to make marks and write for different purposes. Children also regularly visit the local library where they are able to loan books to increase their interest in early reading. Staff use registration time effectively to greet each other and enable children to develop a sense of belonging. Children make choices about the activities they participate in, however, some activities and routines are over directed by staff and therefore restrict children's independence.

Children have opportunities to observe, question and explore their natural curiosity through looking at and collecting natural resources whilst outside on their 'Spring walk'. Older children show a keen interest in their current 'Growth' topic, demonstrating a clear understanding that flowers need sunlight and water to grow. Children are able to construct with a purpose in mind and use hammers, nails and wooden shapes to make flower patterns. Opportunities are provided for children to be creative through activities such as music, role play, painting and exploring materials that include dough, sand and water. Children apply imaginative skills to make up their own games, stories and enjoy acting out familiar roles in the role play area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as individuals and have equal access to a suitable range of resources and activities that help them to appreciate the wider world, for example, books and puzzles showing positive images. Children have opportunities to learn about themselves and others through planned activities, including the celebrations of different festivals. Clear arrangements are in place to ensure that the setting's practice is inclusive. Staff have experience of working with children with English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and show a commitment to ensuring all children are included. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are well behaved, play well together and have formed good relationships. Children are beginning to take turns, with suitable adult support and show care and concern for each other. Children have an appropriate understanding of the nursery's rules and suitable strategies are in place to enhance children's awareness of right and wrong. Staff consistently praise and encourage good behaviour and within the pre-school area, 'Sally Sunflower' is used as a visual incentive and celebration of good behaviour.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Positive and friendly relationships have formed between staff and parents, which contributes to children's well-being. Detailed notice boards and available policies and procedures also provide parents with useful information in relation to the nursery, however, the complaints log currently holds data of a sensitive nature which if shared with other parents would contravene confidentiality. Parents have opportunities to discuss with staff what their children have been doing on a daily basis. Parents report that they are happy with the care their children receive and comment particularly on how friendly staff are and how their children are settled and happy. Parents are provided with information relating to the Foundation Stage and activities provided and are encouraged to support their children's learning both at home and in the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for by caring staff who enjoy their roles and develop warm, positive relationships with the children in their care. A high number of staff are appropriately qualified and recruitment and vetting procedures are thorough, ensuring staff are suitable to work with children. Staff training is also encouraged and two staff have recently completed a foundation degree in early years. Staff are deployed effectively and clear procedures are in place to ensure ratios are maintained throughout the day meaning children are supervised appropriately at all times.

Children's records are completed with parents on admission ensuring staff have a sound knowledge of children's needs. Most of the required documentation is maintained appropriately and stored securely, in order to maintain confidentiality. The manager has started to evaluate the setting's strengths and weaknesses and most areas identified, particularly in relation to safety have been addressed. Overall, children's needs are met.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff receive and value support and advice from other professionals. Staff work well together and communicate with each other successfully, offering each other support where needed. Annual appraisals identify staff's training needs and staff attend regular staff meetings to discuss nursery issues. However, they have not yet established a system to monitor and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of teaching or children's learning to plan for improvement.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to improve safety in relation to minimising risks both indoors and outdoors and improving the fire evacuation procedures. The setting has made significant improvements in this area and the risks regarding the use of drawing pins and the outdoor water feature have been assessed and removed. Fire drills are now recorded so that they can be reviewed and procedures are detailed to ensure that all staff are clear of the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.

At the last education inspection the setting was asked to improve staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage and improve children's opportunities to practise early writing skills and explore different materials. Following the inspection staff attended training to enhance their understanding of the Foundation Stage, however, more recently there have been some staff changes within the pre-school section. Therefore, although staff demonstrated a satisfactory knowledge of the Foundation Stage further improvements are needed in terms of their understanding of how to deliver and adapt planned activities to meet the needs of all children. Writing materials are available throughout the day and early writing is now incorporated into different activities including role play and chalking outside.

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):

- improve the accident recording procedure to ensure that parents sign all accident records
- improve hygiene practices in relation to the sharing of bed linen
- continue to improve the provision of toys and resources for younger children to ensure they provide appropriate challenges and build on children's natural curiosity as learners
- ensure that all staff are aware of the need to maintain privacy and confidentiality; this is with regards to the record of complaints.

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):

- provide further opportunities for children to develop their independence
- ensure that staff are clear about how to adapt activities for children of different stages of ability and review the presentation of activities and teaching methods used to ensure that children are sufficiently stimulated and challenged
- implement systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching.

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