

# Building Blocks

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	306356
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 July 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Christine Stewart
<b>Setting Address</b>	Grayson,, 67 Prenton Road West, Prenton, CH42 9PZ
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<b>Registered person</b>	Gaynor and Neil Williams
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Building Blocks Day nursery is owned by two private individuals. It operates from a large semi-detached house in Prenton. The nursery occupies the whole of the ground floor and has the use of the enclosed back garden. There are staff facilities and an office on the first floor of the property. The babies are cared for between two rooms at the front of the house with the older children using the rear.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 19 children aged between birth and five years. It operates Monday to Friday between the hours of 08.00 and 18.00. There are currently 42 children on roll. Of these seven children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties.

The nursery employs six staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health and physical development is promoted well through regular access to fresh air and physical play. The outdoor play area is accessible in all weathers and provides good opportunities for energetic play. Children gain confidence and learn to coordinate their movements as they climb, slide and run. They create their own obstacle course when they push together pieces of large apparatus and use it to crawl through, climb up, slide down and balance on. They enjoy throwing and catching the balls and knocking down the skittles with the bean bags. They develop their fine motor skills as they confidently use simple tools to roll and cut the dough and skilfully assemble their junk models and handle cutlery at meal times.

Staff are trained in first aid, which means they are able to respond appropriately to children's accidents or incidents. Any accidents are recorded to ensure children's welfare is protected. There is a written sick child policy in place to inform parents of the setting's procedures. This is implemented by staff if children become unwell at the setting so as to act in the child's best interests.

All meals and snacks are prepared on the premises to ensure they are fresh and their ingredients are known. Menu's are displayed in the hall for parents to view. Children's special dietary and individual needs are recorded and met. Children are provided with healthy snack options and regular fresh air and exercise but they are not given explanation for why they might benefit from this. Juice is readily available for most of the day in bottles in the room however, children are unable to freely access drinking water. Meal times are social occasions with children sitting together in small groups at tables. Snack times does not provide the same opportunity for children to chat or to encourage their skills of independence. Children all sit on the floor and their refreshments are handed to them. Opportunity for children to self serve their own food and pour their own drinks is not given as all meals are plated in the kitchen and given out by staff.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in spacious and clean premises. Parents and children are warmly greeted as they arrive helping them to feel a sense of belonging. Children have access to a sufficient range of toys and equipment, which are well maintained, age-appropriate, safe and clean; helping to protect the children's well-being.

Children's welfare is protected from harm because staff are aware of child protection issues. They know the procedures in place and where to seek help in order to protect children. The child protection statement includes the procedure to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.

Risk assessments are carried out by the manager and written policies concerning safety are in place. However, children's safety is compromised when the garden is not checked prior to children playing out and there is collected water in containers and buckets. Children learn about fire safety and regularly practise the fire evacuation procedure, helping them to understand how to keep safe in the event of a fire or emergency evacuation. A doorbell system is in place

at the entrance area to manage access to the building. However, a visitor record is not maintained.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are relaxed and secure they arrive happily and settle quickly. They have formed relationships with their carers, who greet them warmly and show interest in what the children have to say or choose to do. Children take part in activities that engage them in purposeful play. Babies enjoy plenty of cuddles and have a secure bond with their key workers. Staff know the babies in their care and use information obtained from the parents to ensure babies benefit from continuity of care. Babies enjoy good levels of interaction with the staff which helps them to feel safe and confident in their surroundings. Equipment and resources are organised and positioned to stimulate their interest and encourage them to crawl, walk and stretch.

All children enjoy regular sensory and exploratory experiences, such as paint, glue, sand and water. Children's learning and pleasure is supported as staff let children play at their own pace. For example, supervised by staff, babies enjoy playing with the sand and painting with sponges exploring the contrasting textures with their hands. They appear fascinated by the feel of the paint and the effect they create with the paint and sponge on the paper.

#### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff understand how children learn and provide a range of activities generally appropriate for the age and ability of children attending that help them to make progress towards the early learning goals. They develop an awareness of time through the established daily routines and their discussions about the days of the week at circle time.

Children relate well to each other and have formed strong friendships, often seeking others to share their experiences with, such as when they are playing in the puppet theatre. They are confident speakers and listeners, taking turns to speak and listen at circle time and lunch time. They are willing to help tidy away toys and other resources.

Children have access to a range of books for enjoyment and learn that print carries meaning. They 'read' stories aloud to each other, mimicking their own story time as they hold the book for all to see and confidently tell a story. Many children recognise their own name, are forming recognisable letters and show an eagerness to write their name.

Children are familiar with different resources, such as paint, crayons and glue. They use them freely for both adult-led and independent activities. The children enjoy imaginative play, such as creating a show using the puppet theatre.

Children are developing appropriate levels of personal independence, as they wash their hands at appropriate times and use knives and forks with increasing skill at lunchtime. They make choices about their play and follow what interests them. Staff support this by giving them time to complete the activities they have selected.

Children communicate well with each other, they share and take turns. They play cooperatively as they construct and model with junk materials such as cardboard boxes and paper plates. The children have some opportunities to learn about the world around them and observe changes in the weather. When playing outside they observe and discuss the different colours of the

clouds. They predict what the colour indicates, for example they are aware that the heavy grey clouds overhead mean rain is very likely.

Activities organised support many areas of the children's learning and development in one activity. For example, during an outside junk modelling activity linked to the topic 'transport' the children learn about number, shape and size as they select large or small rectangle boxes, count four large or small circle wheels. They are encouraged to use a range of tools to glue and paint and work cooperatively in a group. They use their senses to listen and identify out door sounds, such as a motor bike roaring past, a plane flying overhead. They develop their thinking and problem solve as to how they will create their model with the materials provided. Social skills are encouraged as they share and take turns when using the paint and the glue, they chat and are excited to show their models to their friends and other staff members.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children with additional needs are appropriately included and supported. Staff work with parents and outside agencies to meet children's needs. Staff promote positive behaviour. Children are encouraged to practise good manners, take turns and share. Staff use consistent strategies, such as plenty of reward and praise and they spend individual time with the children. They clearly enjoy the praise they receive from the adults and the stickers which are sometimes used to reward them. This helps children to understand responsible behaviour and work cooperatively with each other. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are learning about the local and wider community as they visit places of interest for example, they went to the pet shop to purchase a fish and enjoyed an outing to a farm. They understand that English is not the only spoken language from their weekly visits from a teacher of Spanish. However, the limited range of resources and images to reflect positive images of diversity within today's society does not contribute to the children's understanding of their immediate and wider world.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are warmly greeted as they arrive at the setting and engage in easy conversation with staff about their children's activities and interests. They say that they are very happy and satisfied with the care their children receive. Staff share information about the setting through discussion and newsletters helps to keeps parents up to date with events and activities. Parents can have access to their child's development records and their individual diaries inform of children's learning.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation is satisfactory. The staff team is long-standing and work well together. They are aware of designated responsibilities and deploy themselves to support children's development and learning. Children are well settled in the environment, which is set up with clear designated play areas. Children arrive and quickly leave their parents to play with their friends or choose an activity. Children who arrive at 'circle time' happily place themselves with the group and join in the conversation and learning. However, some activities are 'pitched' too high, thus, they have little learning value. For example the teddy flash cards used for simple addition and subtraction, and all children in one play room being presented with the full alphabet at circle time

A key worker system is in place which helps the children to feel secure with staff who know them well. All required documentation, which contributes to the health, safety and well-being of the children is in place and is generally well maintained. However, the visitors record is not always completed to ensure children's and visitors welfare is protected.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. There are systems in place for staff appraisal and for the regular sharing of information. This supports staff understanding of policies, procedures, and planning of the curriculum for children's learning. The management identifies staff training needs to continue to improve the care for children. However, the next steps for children's learning and interests are not always identified and planning for children's progress in all aspects of the learning goals is not robust. Planning does not identify how activities are to be differentiated to meet the learning needs of all children. The opportunity for children to develop skills and understanding of information and communication technology is not sufficiently planned for to foster their interest.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting was required to: improve planning to ensure that children have more chances to solve simple mathematical problems and to make marks or write for a purpose. Adapt grouping of children to ensure that older and more able children are extended and that children's concentration is sustained. Develop procedures for notifying Ofsted of staff changes. Provide evidence that new staff have been police checked and maintain minimum staffing ratios at all time. Develop a written record of procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a staff member and the written record of procedures to be followed in the event of a child not being collected. Ensure that the premises are maintained at an adequate and comfortable temperature. All these recommendations have been met with positive effect on children's safety, welfare and learning.

A recommendation to improve the monitoring of planning to ensure that gaps are identified and a balance of activities is provided remains an area for improvement.

### **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.

## **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):

- consider how children's independence and social skills can be developed at snack time and how drinking water can be made more freely accessible throughout the day
- further develop risk assessment to include checking outside areas to protect children from the hazard of collected water in the garden
- maintain a record of visitors to the service.
- further develop an appropriate range of activities images and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

### **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):

- develop planning further to show how activities are differentiated to meet the learning needs of all children and the systems for tracking children to ensure that they are making progress through the stepping stones
- develop leadership and management by implementing effective systems for monitoring planning and teaching, to ensure that children receive a balance of activities over the six areas of learning and that next steps are identified for individual children.

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