

Dolls House

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY348827
Inspection date	02 July 2007
Inspector	Lisa Ellis
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Registered person	Dolls House Day Nursery
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?

Dolls House Nursery registered in 2007 and is privately owned. It is located in the residential area of Cosham in Portsmouth, Hampshire. There are currently 45 children on roll, of which eight are in receipt of government funding for nursery education.

The nursery is open for 51 weeks of the year, Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 18:00 and cares for children from the local and surrounding areas. There are systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language.

There are currently six members of staff, including the owner, employed to work with the children. All staff have relevant qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning very good hygiene procedures throughout the nursery. Once they can walk they go into the bathroom with staff to wash their hands to minimise the spread of germs. Older children collect their own tissues to wipe their noses and dispose of soiled ones appropriately. Children are encouraged to brush their teeth after lunch to promote good oral hygiene. They are protected from the spread of infection as parents are asked not to bring unwell children into nursery and staff ask parents to collect children that become unwell during the day. Children are protected from the sun as parents are asked to supply sunscreen and sun hats. The majority of the garden is shaded by trees which helps protect children from the harmful effects of the sun.

Children's health is promoted as they are provided with clean bedding and staff maintain the environment to a good standard, for example, by cleaning the tables and changing mats to reduce the risk of cross contamination. Children are dealt with appropriately following accidents as all staff have first aid qualifications and the first aid kit is well stocked. Parents provide their written consent for permission for staff to seek emergency medical treatment where needed. This ensures children receive suitable treatment should there be a more serious incident.

Children's dietary needs are met as the nursery provides healthy breakfasts, snacks and teas. Parents are asked to provide an ice pack in children's lunch boxes to keep the children's food stored at suitable temperatures until staff serve it. Food that requires reheating is checked with a probe to ensure it reaches the correct temperature to promote the health of the children. Water bottles are always accessible so children can remain suitably hydrated throughout the day. Allergies and intolerances are catered for to meet children's individual dietary requirements.

Children benefit from having daily access to the nursery gardens where there is a wide range of equipment available to promote their physical skills. As well as getting fresh air and exercise in the garden, children also practise moving their bodies in a variety of ways during music and movement activities which help contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children greatly benefit from being cared for in an environment which has recently been completely refurbished, providing them with an exceptionally clean and well maintained building that is bright and welcoming. Children have access to both floors of the property which are well organised to meet the developmental needs of children of all ages. They also have access to a fully enclosed garden which has both grassed and all weather surfaces so children can play in the fresh air all year round. Throughout the nursery children's work and photographs are displayed to value them and to make them feel welcome.

Children have access to an excellent range of resources and furniture to help meet their developmental needs. Equipment is very well maintained with staff following a cleaning rota to ensure it remains in good condition. Children self-select the toys from low-level storage which helps to increase their independence. The nursery has areas for children to sleep, play, eat and relax on bean bags and floor cushions. Babies and children have opportunities to use different rooms within the nursery that are developmentally appropriate. This provides them

with different activities and a change of scenery so they do not have to spend the entire session in one room.

Children are cared for in a secure environment which prevents them from leaving unattended and visitors entering unannounced. High staff ratios are in place throughout the nursery which provides children with good levels of support and good supervision to promote their safety. Risk assessments are carried out before the children go into the garden and safety precautions such as stair gates and socket covers are in place to minimise the risk of accidents. Clear evacuation notices are displayed in each area and staff are aware of the procedures for fire drills although these have not yet been practised with the children.

Children's well-being is effectively promoted as staff have received training and have a good understanding of the child protection procedures. Existing injuries are confidentially recorded and staff are aware that concerns about children's welfare must be reported to social services to promote the safety of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies and young children are provided with a full range of activities to promote their learning in all areas of development. Staff carefully plan fun and interesting activities for the children following the Birth to three matters framework to stimulate and engage them in purposeful play. Staff make daily observations on how babies and young children are progressing and use this information well to plan for the next steps in their development. Interaction between staff and children is very good with staff knowing the children in their key worker groups very well. Children are constantly spoken to by the staff and are encouraged to use new words themselves, helping them to be skilful communicators.

Young children show true delight as they are able to fully explore their surroundings and the resources available to them. For example, they sit and giggle as they investigate the texture of paint in a large tray on the floor. As they become more confident, some actually get into the paint tray and enjoy making marks on paper with their hands and feet. The two year olds get lots of opportunities to interact with the older children which benefits both sets of children. For example the older children enjoy the responsibility of showing the younger ones what to do and the younger children have positive role models to look up to and learn from.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff make very good use of the observations that they make on the children and the evaluations of activities to inform future planning. This results in planning being regularly updated to ensure it helps children to make progress at their own speed and helps them to reach their full potential. Staff take time to explain focused activities to children, helping them understand what they are doing and why. Children benefit from staff having time to play with them although staff do not interfere when children are playing well by themselves. For example, a member of staff helps some children to set up the computer but does not take over, just sits back and allows children to investigate independently.

Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They are enthusiastic in their teaching and get fully involved in group activities, such as dancing around with children during music and movement activities. Children's records show that they are regularly updated and are used to identify gaps in children's learning. Staff use this information

well to adapt planning to ensure all areas of learning are covered to help prepare children for the next steps in their education. Staff know children's individual abilities well and provide differentiation for more or less able children. Records show that some children are making rapid progress in their learning which indicates that they are appropriately challenged by staff.

Children are making good progress in all areas of development as activities are well planned and enjoyable. Children are keen to come into nursery and quickly get involved in activities of their choice. They show great independence, selecting their own food at snack times, taking themselves to the toilet and getting on their own shoes and outdoor clothing. Children play very well together, working as a team at tidy up time and thinking of others. For example, when a child fetched a paper towel to dry off the outside toys, he also got one for all of his peers so they could dry the toys off too.

Children's literacy skills are developing well. They enjoy selecting books and listening to staff reading to them, often joining in with familiar stories. Children practise their emergent writing skills throughout sessions with many being able to write recognisable letters and some writing their own names. Children are learning to link sounds and letters as staff help them identify words by saying the initial sounds. Children's listening skills are developing very well with the use of a 'special stone', which is used when having discussions in large groups. Whoever is holding the special stone is the one that is allowed to talk. Children understand that when one child is talking they must wait until they get the stone before it is their turn to talk.

Children's mathematical knowledge is developing through planned activities and incidental learning. For example they confidently count out objects using one to one correspondence in free play and are learning about basic calculation by playing games in small groups. Some children can recognise written numerals and all children use mathematical language in their play.

Children have many opportunities to find out about the world around them. They make very good use of the 'finding out' area which is well equipped with resources to promote their investigation skills. When playing in the garden children go back into the finding out area to fetch bug catchers and magnifying glasses after spotting spiders and woodlice outside. Children have daily opportunities to practise skills such as clicking and dragging with the mouse when playing on the computer. They are learning about caring for living things as they grow their own carrots and take responsibility for cleaning the guinea pig cage and feeding the pets.

Children are free to express their creativity during activities. They all choose to create something different when making 3D models from recyclable items and enjoy sticking their own bits and pieces on them. Children are happy in their play, often breaking into song as they play alongside their peers. They enjoy showing their imaginations as they move in time to music and have free access to a range of musical instruments for them to make their own sounds.

Children's fine and gross motor skills are developing well as they have regular access to equipment such as scissors, puzzles, climbing equipment and bicycles. They show good spatial awareness as they move around indoors and outside in a variety of ways such as skipping, hopping and running. They can negotiate space well and move round each other safely, even when riding scooters and bicycles in the garden.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated with equal respect and are valued as individuals. Staff know children well and adapt activities to ensure they are suitable for all. Children are learning about the world around them through planned activities, such as celebrating different festivals and through resources and equipment that reflect diversity, such as dolls, musical instruments, role play equipment and posters. Children's individual needs are met through discussion with parents. Staff are aware of the agencies they can go to for assistance in helping to meet the needs of children with English as an additional language and those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Babies benefit from staff doing baby sign language with them which helps with their early communication skills. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children are highly praised and encouraged to promote positive behaviour. Children are actively involved in keeping the nursery clean and tidy and are rewarded with stickers for helping staff to tidy up resources before changing activities. Children who are toilet training are familiar with the routine of placing a sticker on their chart when they are successful in this area. Children benefit from being cared for by staff who act as positive role models, for example staff always use their manners and encourage children to do the same.

Children are very aware of the rules of the setting, telling each other that they must use their eyes to look and ears to listen prior to story time. The older children have been involved in devising their own rules which are displayed using words and their own drawings to remind them of the behavioural boundaries. Younger children are calmly distracted when play becomes boisterous, for example, if a toddler tries to pull themselves up using another child they are just moved away and given a toy to play with or a book to look at. Children's behaviour throughout the whole nursery is exemplary with staff showing a very good understanding of behaviour management tactics for children of differing ages.

New parents are given written information about the nursery and how it operates so they are aware of the policies and procedures that are followed to meet the needs of the children. Flexible settling in arrangements are available to allow parents to visit with their children to help them get accustomed to nursery life in their own time.

Parents of babies and young children are asked to complete questionnaires based on their children's daily routines to help ensure consistency of care. All parents are given verbal daily feedback on how their children have been and what they have been doing. In addition the parents of younger children receive written information in a diary which can also be used for parents to record information that nursery staff may find useful in meeting the needs of the children, for example, if they have had a restless night. Parents are informed of what is going on in the group through regular newsletters and the notice board.

The partnership with parents of children in receipt of government funding for nursery education is good. The prospectus gives reference to the Foundation Stage but does not elaborate on what it is and how it is used to help children make progress in their learning. However staff show parents the planning and give verbal explanations of how it is used if they ask.

Parents are asked about what their children can already do when they start working towards the early learning goals and staff soon start assessing new children to ensure the planning of activities meet the needs of all children. Parents are involved in their children's learning as they

are asked to bring in items from home to compliment what the children are learning in nursery. Parents are aware of the topics as they are displayed in the entrance hall and are given examples of what they can do at home to assist their children's learning if they ask for it. Parents have access to their children's records at any time so they can observe their individual progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by an experienced staff team who show a commitment to training and who all have relevant childcare qualifications. Staff are appropriately vetted and their ongoing suitability is regularly assessed to promote the safety of the children. Staff have written job descriptions and receive inductions to understand their place within the nursery and how the group is run. A staff hand book is in place detailing the aims and objectives of the nursery as well as the policies and procedures to ensure staff work consistently to promote the smooth delivery of care and education.

The nursery is very well organised with all staff knowing what they are doing and providing a steady stream of activities to keep children occupied throughout the day. For example, while some staff play with the children, others prepare the next activities so children are not waiting around in between activities. All of the required paperwork is in place and is shared with parents as necessary to promote the welfare of the children. The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care.

Children are protected from unvetted persons as they are never left unattended with them. The attendance of staff is recorded in the children's register which contains the required detail but does not always show the times of arrival of all children. Records are kept of official visitors to the premises but the attendance of students and prospective parents are not always recorded. This sometimes results in inaccurate records of people who have been in contact with the children.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The owner and manager have devised an action plan highlighting areas that they are working towards for future development. This shows that they are monitoring the delivery of nursery education, are able to identify their own strengths and weaknesses and are striving for improvement. Both the owner and manager work with the children on a weekly basis which enables them to monitor and influence the teaching of nursery education.

Plans reflect that staff will soon be starting peer observations to highlight personal strengths and areas for improvement in teaching. There are systems in place for staff to self appraise their performance before they have their appraisal with the owner and manager which will highlight any training needs and work on the strengths of individual's teaching practices to maintain teaching standards to promote positive outcomes for children.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 fire drills are carried out on a regular basis
- ensure registers reflect the times of arrival for all children and that the presence of all visitors to the setting are recorded

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 develop information for parents in relation to the Foundation Stage

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