



Pumpkin Patch

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY236710
Inspection date	20 July 2005
Inspector	Carol Patricia Willett
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Registered person	Pumpkin Patch
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?

Pumpkin Patch Day Nursery opened in October 2001. It is privately owned and operates from a detached house close to the town centre of Fleet. The nursery accepts children from three months to five years. Children aged under two years use two rooms on the ground floor and children over two years use three rooms on the first floor. Kitchen facilities are available and a separate ground floor room is used for meals. Toilet facilities are available on both floors. There is an enclosed garden

available for outside play.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year.

There are currently 42 children on roll. This includes 16 funded 3 and 4-year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with special needs.

Six full-time and two part-time members of staff work with the children. This includes the manager, who is supernumerary. The nursery also employs a cook and cleaner. All staff are well qualified and have a commitment to ongoing professional development. The nursery receives support from the Early Years Partnerships through the Preschool Learning Alliance and has completed an accreditation scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because there are good daily routines and procedures in place and staff promote children's health and dietary needs well. Children develop a good awareness of personal hygiene and self care as they put on shoes, hats and sun-cream for outdoors. Children ask where adult's hats are when they go outside. Children take themselves to the toilet and wash their hands at appropriate times. Younger children sleep and rest according to their needs as staff follow their individual routines. Staff have a good awareness of children's individual health needs and there are mostly good procedures in place to ensure children stay healthy and safe. Hygiene procedures do not effectively minimise the risk of infection for babies as adults go into the baby room wearing outdoor shoes.

The children enjoy a range of healthy nutritious meals that are cooked on site. They enthusiastically eat the chicken casserole with vegetables and potatoes. Comprehensive documentation ensures parent's wishes and children's dietary needs are known. Weekly menus are displayed and are a source of discussion between the children and staff. Drinking water is freely available and children help themselves.

Children enjoy fresh air and play outside daily, developing good physical skills as they use wheeled toys and climb and slide on the climbing frame. They throw, catch and kick balls and use other resources to further develop skills. Children enjoy lively music and movement sessions as they listen and respond to the 'Sticky Kids' tapes. They have access to a wide range of tools and resources to develop fine motor skills. They manipulate jigsaw pieces and construction toys. They enjoy making models with clay and playdough using appropriate tools. Babies and younger children develop their senses as they experience tactile materials when they hand paint and play with materials such as shaving foam and corn-flour.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and learn in a warm, welcoming, safe environment where staff organise the small space effectively. Children have a sense of belonging and develop self esteem as the brightly decorated playrooms contain displays of their work and they are greeted warmly by staff and other children. They confidently approach adults to express their needs. Children use a suitable and sufficient range of good quality, age appropriate, play materials, some of which are stored on low level shelving to enable children to make independent choices. There are good procedures in place to check the suitability of the resources and equipment.

Children develop well as there are good recruiting and vetting procedures in place which ensures well qualified, caring staff, care for and closely supervise the children. Children keep safe in the nursery because staff follow well documented policies and procedures, for example when using the stairs and when taking children out for walks in the local environment. Children develop an understanding of fire evacuation as there are regular practises and these are well recorded. Children stay safe as staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures and their responsibilities. Staff refer to the child protection policy and know who to contact if they are concerned.

The management team and the staff conduct regular risk assessment of the premises to identify hazards. Each room of the nursery displays the risk assessment of the area on the wall. Staff do not always reduce identified hazards straight away for example the rose bush in the garden is a potential hazard to the children's safety. It is very thorny and is growing at children's eye level.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and relaxed and enjoy their time in the nursery. Staff plan the day well so that children have good opportunities to be active, to enjoy fresh air and to rest. They plan a wide range of activities to ensure children develop in all areas and keep busy and well occupied throughout the day. The children show good imagination and interest as they play with the toys and resources and explore their environment. The younger children have very good opportunities to explore their senses as staff provide a good range of tactile experiences, including finger painting. They have sufficient time to explore them at their own pace. Children develop good communication and social skills with adults and each other in the baby room as they have a short period of time during the morning with no play materials. Staff are beginning to use the Birth to Three matters framework to develop the curriculum for children under three years. Children are confident in their relationships with adults and they take a lively interest in visitors to the setting engaging them readily in conversation.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are happy and confident and make good progress to the early learning goals because staff are experienced, friendly, caring and attentive. Children's thinking, understanding and learning develops rapidly as staff use good teaching strategies and questioning techniques. Children make good progress as the staff plan and provide a wide range of activities and experiences, which are linked to the stepping stones. The planning does not consistently show how activities can be adapted for children learning at different rates and sometimes do not provide sufficient challenge for more able children. Staff adapt activities to meet the needs of children with special educational needs.

Children's behaviour is very good and their personal self care skills develop well as staff motivate them through praise and encouragement. Children confidently express their needs and ideas as they relate well to the friendly caring staff and the other children. Most children are confident fluent speakers. They develop good imaginative language as they role play in the home corner and with small toy animals. They handle books well and enjoy listening to stories relating the story to their own experiences, as staff encourage their participation. Children confidently count and compare numbers at registration time as they count the number of boys and girls, for example they use mathematical language in play. They develop calculation skills as they sing number songs. Children confidently use technology and handle the computer mouse with skill. They freely explore new resources to see how they work. Children are aware of the passage of time as they discuss the date and month. They enjoy outings in the local community and visit the shops and library. They learn about their own and other cultures through well planned activities. For example they enjoy visitors into the nursery who share adult roles, such a policeman and nurse and enjoy the visiting farm where they learn about the animals. Children enthusiastically join in with singing matching words and actions. They have some opportunities to explore colours and a range of materials in adult led craft activities. They do not have good access to a range of materials, tools and media to enable them to independently develop their own imagination and creativity or to develop their role play. Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills both indoors and out in the garden.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident, happy and secure in the nursery as staff are aware of and value their individual personalities and provide good experiences to meet their needs. Children develop a good understanding of the wider world as they share festivals such as Diwali, American independence day, Fathers day and Christmas. They talk about their families and experiences at home. They have access to a suitable range of resources to provide positive images of culture, gender and disability. The children have regular outings to local facilities such as shops, parks and library. Visitors to the setting develop children's understanding of adult roles in the community.

Children care about each other and behave very well as they are sensitively supported by the caring staff. Staff use effective praise and encouragement to enable children to learn right from wrong. For example two toddlers receive lots of praise for

helping each other with hats and shoes for outside play. Older children form good relationships with each other holding hands and giving others hugs. They help each other sharing resources and taking turns on the computer and when using felt-pens. Staff use very effective age-appropriate strategies and sensitively guide children when they say unacceptable things, explaining about being polite. They use distraction well for younger children and give older children clear explanations.

Partnerships with parents and carers are very good and children's well-being in the setting is significantly supported by these very good relationships. Parents receive good information, with regard to all aspects of the nursery, in the prospectus, newsletters and notices around the rooms. Staff display time tables, curriculum plans and menus in every room. Children make good progress and staff meet their needs as parents and staff communicate well. They share information on a daily basis. Parents receive regular feedback on children's progress on daily sheets for babies and informal discussions for older children. There are good opportunities for parents to share their children's progress and development as they take home the children's profiles and work folders termly. Useful sheets go with the children as they transfer between rooms in the nursery. Staff consult fully with parents and they are able to comment and contribute to children's records. Children with special needs make good progress because of the effective partnership between nursery staff, parents and outside agencies to produce individual education plans.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well by this positive approach.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children make good progress in all areas of development because the management team have put together a very effective operational plan which ensures children's care, welfare and learning is well supported. The management team monitor and evaluate all aspects of the provision. The nursery development plan shows areas for further improvement for example the garden area and shows what has been achieved already. Children benefit from the effectively organised space and resources and good deployment of staff. The layout of the premises does not allow the children to be totally independent due to the limited space, for example children cannot freely access all resources. Staff rotate them to maintain children's interest and to ensure all children have experience of the resources. Staff feel valued, respected and supported by the strong management team who value their training programs. They share good practice from their training within the nursery, for example the babies spend time interacting with adults and each other without play materials for part of the morning to develop social and communication skills.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Children make very good progress to the early learning goals as staff plan and provide a varied curriculum that is topic based and covers all the early learning goals. Children's assessment records show clear links to the stepping stones. Staff provide a good balance between adult led and child initiated activities which maintains children's

interest and enjoyment and ensures they make good progress in all areas of development. The managers regularly monitor and comment on the learning objectives and activity evaluations. There is a strong commitment to continually update and improve all aspects of the nursery. The provision meet the needs well of every child for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Children's Act inspection the nursery was required to improve the detail in documentation relating to registration, medication, complaints and child protection and that procedures are detailed on how staff would deal with a lost child. There has been good improvement as the management team has reviewed the documentation and have included the necessary detail, though the telephone number for Ofsted is not included in the complaints policy along with the address. Medication records include the date and the child protection policy includes contact details for social services. There is a suitable written procedure for if children become lost.

The nursery education inspection identified three areas for improvement; to provide opportunities for children to develop free creative expression using different materials; to practise writing for a variety of purposes; to develop planning to show how activities can be adapted for children at differing ability levels which shows clear links to the stepping stones. The issue regarding writing for a variety of purposes has been addressed in a satisfactory manner with the provision of a writing area with pencils and pens freely available near the home corner and in the play room for the older children. Planning has been changed but still does not consistently show how activities can be adapted for children learning at different rates and in particular for children who are very capable to ensure activities provide sufficient challenge. This area needs further improvement. Children do not have independent access to a good range of creative materials and tools to enable them to develop their own imagination in craft activities and to extend their role play. This needs further development.

Complaints since the last inspection

A complaint was received regarding the care of children by a member of staff under standard eleven. The provider was asked to conduct an internal investigation. All the staff were interviewed and the behaviour management policy was reviewed to make sure it reflected good practice. Appraisals and observations are conducted with all staff on a regular basis. No further action was taken by Ofsted and the provider remains suitable for registration.

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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):

- develop hygiene procedures to minimise the risk of infection to babies when adults go into the baby room wearing outdoor shoes.
- make sure plants are safe in the garden to enable children to play safely

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 details to show how activities will be adapted for children learning at different rates to ensure they are sufficiently challenging for all children
- increase opportunities for children to independently access a range of tools and materials to enable them to develop their own creative imagination in craft and role play

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