

Flora House Day Nursery LTD

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY348184
Inspection date	06 September 2007
Inspector	Pauline Pinnegar
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Registered person	Diane Kathleen Maile and Ian Ronald Maile
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?

Flora House Day Nursery Limited was registered in 2007. It was previously registered by the present private owners in 2003. The nursery operates from seven activity rooms in a large converted Victorian property in the west end of Darlington. A maximum of 44 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 17.30 excluding bank holidays and in between Christmas and New Year. Children have access to outdoor play areas. Children attend for a variety of sessions and the nursery serves children from the local and surrounding areas.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 44 children at any one time. There are currently 79 children aged from 10 months to eight years old on roll. Of these, 12 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs fifteen members of staff. Of these, fourteen hold appropriate early years qualifications and one member is working towards a further qualification. The nursery receives

regular support from the local authority and is undertaking the Darlington Quality Assurance Scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children use the outdoor environment daily. They enjoy a well planned variety of both indoor and outdoor physical play experiences. They love the freedom of movement offered outdoors and use space well to develop their physical skills. They learn to pedal and scoot safely, avoiding obstacles, and have great fun as they roll in the play tunnel. They practise their ball skills as they throw and catch with confidence. Children use the large climbing frame with agility and confidence. Children have regular planned opportunities to develop coordination and control, as they enjoy music and movement sessions. They develop their fine motor skills as they use equipment, such as scissors and pencils competently and skilfully. Babies and toddlers love clambering on the small slide and crawling in and out of the play tent. Toddlers have sturdy toys to push along to support their developing mobility. Older children in the out of school club access different outdoor areas when they are not in use by younger children and recently enjoyed developing their physical skills on the assault course.

The nursery environment is very bright and well maintained. High priority is given to children's health and staff consistently implement good health and hygiene practices. Parents are clearly informed that sick children cannot be cared for, so that children are protected from infection. Arrangements for first aid and administering medication fully meet requirements and effectively protect children. Children wash their hands after using the toilet and before they have their snacks and meals. Staff consistently promote children's awareness of good hygiene within everyday routines, so that children learn how to keep themselves well. They are developing good levels of independence in attending to their own personal care, as they manage the toilet independently and put on their own shoes. Staff observe their strict nappy changing procedures to protect children's health and avoid cross-infection. Young children are able to sleep and rest fully in line with their own routines and parents' wishes.

Parents are fully consulted about their child's health and dietary needs. Children are well nourished and enjoy a varied menu of freshly cooked, healthy food including organic milk. Menus are clearly displayed for parents. Children are encouraged to try a variety of different foods, including lots of vegetables and fruits. They confidently make their likes and dislikes known. They are occasionally involved in preparation of food and prepare healthy sandwiches. Children also learn about healthy choices as they play the 'healthy chef' game. Older children take part in various baking activities. Snack and lunch times are sociable occasions. Children freely access drinks of water from the jugs which are situated in the activity rooms and younger children are offered drinks regularly so they remain hydrated.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a nursery environment that is warm and welcoming where children are thoroughly safe and secure. The nursery is brightly decorated to a good standard with attractive displays of children's work, photographs, and information for parents. All of this successfully contributes to a stimulating environment for children. The setting has good safety and security precautions, such as closed circuit television (CCTV), coded external doors, and a visitors log

book. A well considered range of good quality resources is mostly stored at child height so that children can select them freely. Equipment is appropriate for the different age groups and regularly checked for safety and cleanliness. Sturdy furniture is provided to help young children develop their walking skills. Comprehensive risk assessments are conducted and practice is consistently evaluated to increase all children's safe participation in all everyday activities.

Staff recognise that children's safety is paramount. They monitor the premises daily and take appropriate steps to minimise risks, for example, they are unable to access electrical socket covers or sharp objects. Children are learning to keep themselves safe as staff involve them in discussions and teach them safe practice, such as how to handle scissors correctly, and how to move around the nursery safely. Emergency evacuation procedures are practised regularly to raise staff and children's awareness of what to do should an incident occur. Children develop their independence within a safe environment. Staff discuss limits and boundaries with them within everyday activities. Children are encouraged to tidy away toys as they finish with them to keep the areas free from clutter. Their awareness of road safety is developing through role play activities using crossing patrol props and they take part in discussions about road safety as the local crossing patrol officer visits the nursery.

Children are cared for by staff who give high priority to protecting children and keeping them safe. They help children to feel confident to make their needs known and sensitively establish supportive relationships with parents. Key staff have attended external training and are aware of the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. They understand their responsibilities within child protection procedures, enabling them to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded. Appropriate procedures for recording any concerns are in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop confidence and self-esteem, and are clearly establishing positive and rewarding relationships with staff. For example, babies are very content and secure in their calm environment, they are extremely relaxed and at ease with staff and regularly hold up their arms to be cuddled. Children are supported by staff who know them well. They show interest in what children are doing and sensitively support their play. They explore a wide variety of sensory materials and treasure baskets, which stimulate their senses and curiosity. They love to explore different textures with the 'feely board' and the shiny music shakers. They have fun banging the wooden spoons together. Staff are gently in tune with babies' needs, responding intuitively and sensitively to non-verbal communications. However, toddlers move around the various activity rooms several times throughout the day. Their daily routines are not as relaxed, and does not allow children to share and absorb experiences gently, at their own pace. This is unsettling for children and means some planned activities do not result in the best outcomes for children.

Staff talk frequently with parents and use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan experiences and activities for children. Records of achievement are linked to the aspects of the framework and allow staff to plan activities that meet the individual needs of the children. Children experiment with different media and develop their own ideas as they explore with sand, water, paint and dough. The current topic within the nursery is 'mini beasts'. Children explore different creatures with magnifying glasses and make collage spiders and pictures of caterpillars. All children enjoy building with construction toys and concentrate well as they listen to 'The hungry caterpillar' story. Children begin to distinguish between right and wrong; they receive clear explanations on the few occasions where staff intervene, for example, in

order to encourage sharing. They are well mannered, always saying please, thank you and excuse me. Older children in the out of school club take part in a variety of activities which include art and craft, baking, face painting and mask making.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a satisfactory knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum, so that children make sound progress towards the early learning goals. The daily environment is planned to offer children experiences in all areas of learning. The continuous provision for older children, however, is based in three rooms and enabling children to visit all areas, which results in frequent interruptions to their free choices and spontaneous free play. Children are enthusiastic and confidently explore new experiences, as they develop their own play ideas. However, planning does not include sufficient detail regarding differentiation for children and how activities are to be adapted to accommodate this. This means that there is not always sufficient challenge within the planned activities. Activities are not always planned to ensure effective use of time. Children can be asked to sit at activities for a considerable length of time. Staff have developed clear and varied systems to observe children's interests and monitor their individual progress. Assessments of progress are clearly linked to the stepping stones.

Staff adopt a very relaxed, cheerful approach with children which successfully ensures they are motivated and enthusiastic to learn. Children are confident communicators, who use language well to share their own ideas and experiences. Staff introduce new language into activities. They encourage children's opportunities to use language in different ways. Children listen with pleasure to stories and become interested in letters sounds. They have many opportunities to write for real purposes. Children recognise their name and older children can confidently write their own name. Children behave well as they share and take turns with the resources. They learn to concentrate and persevere well with activities they enjoy. They make friends and relate well to others. They play cooperatively, developing imaginary games and learning to share and take turns. Children use mathematical language and can count beyond 10 and recognise written numerals. They use comparative size and positional language independently in their construction play.

Children construct with purpose as they use their imagination making spaceships using building bricks. They also concentrate well as they build with small bricks copying drawn pictures. Children are gaining a good understanding of different cultures and beliefs as they celebrate various festivals. Although information and technology equipment is readily available to children this is not always effectively used to develop children's development in this area. Children explore a range of different media including chalk, paint and malleable materials. They use their imagination well as they pretend to be a 'knight playing the guitar'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel a strong sense of belonging to the nursery. They are very familiar with routines, which enhances their sense of security. Staff work closely with parents to find out what is important to each child, so that children know they are valued as individuals. They listen closely to what children say and find out about their interests. Children are welcomed into the setting and participate in all activities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children access a suitable range of resources which increase their awareness of diversity. Planning includes activities to help children develop a positive attitude towards

different cultures and beliefs. Well planned visitors to the nursery stimulate children's knowledge of local issues. The nursery has clear procedures in place to support children with disabilities and learning difficulties. The named coordinator has undergone relevant training. The nursery currently supports several children who speak English as an additional language. Procedures ensure their needs are fully considered.

Children learn to be kind and polite as staff gently and consistently reinforce rules and boundaries. Good behaviour is sensitively encouraged and rewarded. They learn to keep the play environment tidy, to share, take turns and think about others. Staff very clearly explain why certain behaviour is unacceptable so that children feel safe. Behaviour is good throughout the nursery.

Relationships with parents and carers are good. Parents are confident in approaching staff and regularly share information about their child. Written daily diaries are used to share information about younger children. Parents enjoy relaxed and comfortable relationships, which helps to promote children's sense of security. They feel confident to raise any concerns. Policies and procedures are always available for parents to refer and an informative parents notice board is used well. Regular newsletters also keeps parents informed and current topics within the nursery. The complaints procedure is displayed for parents on their notice board, and is also included in the comprehensive parents pack. It reflects current guidance and gives parents the contact details of the regulator. A complaints log is kept as required. Parents are able to access their child's record of achievement at any time and receive regular copies of written observations.

Partnership with parents with regard to the provision of nursery education is satisfactory. Parents receive an information pack when their child starts nursery, which includes details of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Information about the learning opportunities and activities within the continuous provision is available in the pre-school play rooms. Open days are planned, and children's written profiles are given to parents when the child leaves nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded. Recruitment procedures are robust, ensuring that staff are suitably skilled and experienced to work with children. Well planned induction procedures, together with ongoing staff monitoring and appraisal, ensure staff are able to support children effectively. Required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and there are procedures in place for regular review. Parents' wishes regarding their child's care clearly influence day to day practice and clear written agreements are recorded. Children are cared for by a high level of qualified staff and most hold a current first aid certificate, which exceeds minimum requirements and protects children.

Younger children are cared for in small groups and are appropriately supported by their key carer, which positively contributes to their care and well-being. Ratios of adults to children are always well met. This ensures continuity of care for children. All staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Consequently, the nursery operates efficiently and runs smoothly.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The team are keen to develop the delivery of the Foundation Stage and seek advice from the local authority on its implementation. Staff are supported effectively to work together as a cohesive team. Although

there are systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching and its impact on children's learning, these are not sufficiently robust.

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

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- review the impact of routines on the play experiences especially of the younger children, and consider ways to enhance their opportunity to extend their own play ideas and more freely explore their own interests.

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):

- ensure activity planning clearly shows differentiation for children and activities are adapted to accommodate this
- use time more effectively to promote children's learning towards the early learning goals
- develop use of the available accommodation and resources to help children have more choices of activities
- develop the systems for monitoring the nursery education.

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