

# Reameadow Children Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY262528
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Teresa Marie Taylor
<b>Setting Address</b>	5 River Brook Drive, Stirchley, Birmingham, West Midlands, B30 2SH
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4582376
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Birmingham City Council
<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 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?

Reameadow Day Nursery is a long established local authority nursery provision which registered with Ofsted 2003. It operates from a purpose built single storey building in the Stirchley area of Birmingham. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:00 throughout the year except for bank holidays. The group offers core hours from 10:00 to 15:30. All children have access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 45 children on roll. Of these 11 receive funding for early education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery employs 11 members of staff all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

The daily routines, the examples shown by staff and explanations given to children are enabling them to learn about good personal hygiene as they understand why they should wash their hands before meals and after visiting the bathroom. The younger children are escorted to the toilet and older children are encouraged to go alone. This encourages their self-care and growing independence. Staff take positive steps to help prevent the spread of infection by ensuring rooms are kept clean, discussing the reasons for good hygiene with the children and displaying information on how to reduce cross-infection. Children are further protected when they are ill as staff follow comprehensive sickness and exclusion policies and have access to a list of reportable, communicable diseases. Staff record all accidents and ensure parental consent is in place prior to administering prescribed medication ensuring children receive the appropriate treatment they require.

Children are eager to undertake physical activity. They play outside each day, weather permitting, with a range of outdoor play equipment, which promotes their co-ordination and physical development. The outdoor play area is divided to ensure children of different ages can play safely. They have regular physical activity sessions indoors and enjoy music and movement, action songs and rhymes. Children receive good attention and support from the staff in developing their spatial awareness and children understand why exercise and fresh air is good for them.

Nutritional snacks are offered daily which encourages the children to develop healthy eating habits and all rooms provide fresh drinking water to which children help themselves. There are posters and regular discussions on healthy eating. This has given the children a good understanding of healthy food and why it is good for them. The nursery promotes 'five a day' and provides parents with information about healthy eating. Information on allergies is displayed and alternative meals are available. The cook has a very good understanding of children's dietary needs and assists the staff at lunch times. The nursery request parents do not send sweets and food in and the nursery provide birthday cakes, to ensure that children's good health is maintained and children with allergies are not exposed to risks.

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

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe and secure within the nursery as all doors are kept secure and a visitors record is kept. Staff are vigilant and are aware of where the children are at all times. A good range of safe and suitable toys and equipment are available. They are easily accessible which promotes children's independence and choice. Furniture is child sized and conforms to safety standards. The environment is bright, colourful and very child-centred. Children are praised for their care and consideration for each other which develops their self-esteem. Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised as staff conduct daily checks to reduce potential hazards, both indoors and out, and a full risk assessment has been carried out and recorded. The outside play area is fully enclosed and secure and children are further protected as the play area is sub divided to allow different age and ability groups to play safely at the same time.

Positive steps are taken to promote safety in the setting and there are good policies and procedures in place to support the practice. Children learn about fire safety as the evacuation

procedure is discussed, practised regularly and recorded, ensuring they understand the routine and could safely exit the nursery if the alarms sounded. Staff develop children's awareness of safety as they give clear explanations, for example, 'don't throw equipment or you might hurt someone'. The welfare of children is given high priority and accident and medication records are in place, up to date and countersigned by parents.

There is a designated child protection officer and staff are familiar with the nursery policy and procedure for reporting any concerns so children are safeguarded. There are clear procedures should any allegations be made about staff. Parents are provided with information on child protection and the policy and procedures are covered during the first week of induction with staff and students. Regular training ensures staff keep their knowledge and skills up to date.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, confident and sociable. Children are enthusiastic on arrival at nursery and are eager to join their peers. There are very secure and trusting relationships between children and the staff. Children have a good attitude. Younger children are engaged in an extensive range of activities throughout the day. Staff know children's personalities very well and they are clear about how to support their individual needs. This ensures all children receive appropriate care and attention.

All children are very active. They endeavour to seek out their own challenges and become engrossed in purposeful play but older children were hampered by the rigid structure of their day during the inspection. They enjoy their time spent in groups or in one to one activities with staff. Children are independent in the majority of aspects in both care, learning and play. Younger children are excited by the opportunities offered to them and join in with enthusiasm. They acquire good dexterity as they learn to build with construction toys and a wide range of creative activities. Staff plan and provide an excellent range of stimulating activities and constructively implement the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which contributes to positive outcomes for children.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are progressing through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals which is evident from their regular assessments and completed developmental records. They are comfortable in their surroundings but unsure of the current staff team. The room is over organised but light, bright and attractive with many excellent displays of children's work. Children are not excited and insufficiently stimulated by the activities set out for them. They became bored with the activities on offer and did not receive an appropriate response to requests for alternative play opportunities.

Children benefit from the excellent understanding and knowledge senior staff have of the stepping stones and the Foundation Stage. This is evident in the planning which covers all the areas of learning and the number of child initiated activities seen on previous activity plans. However, the shortage of permanent, experienced staff in the pre-school is at present limiting children's ability to explore and extend their own learning. Children's individual files show that normally excellent use is made of observations and assessments to ensure children's individual needs are met.

The present routine provides a restricted range and variety of daily activities and therefore children are not able to extend and consolidate their learning. Staff chose individual pages of toys for children to cut up and glue to make pictures and few children persevered with the activity. Staff used little mathematical language although, at times some good conversations were heard but they were patchy and not extended. Children develop a respect for each other and property, as staff encourage good manners, consideration and cooperation, such as when the children help to tidy up. Children were offered few opportunities to extend their independence or freely choose their own play activities resulting in some poor behaviour and raised noise levels within the room.

Children do appreciate the extensive variety of books available to them and they are learning how to use books for facts and for stories. They enjoy looking at books on their own and with friends, always treating the books carefully. However, staff failed to respond to children's requests for stories as they concentrated on planned activities. Staff missed many opportunities to extending the children's vocabulary as they did not actively encourage discussion except at circle time. Inappropriate responses were made to children at lunch time and children's unhappiness was not explored or dealt with appropriately. Speaking and listening skills were sometimes managed well, for example, when children were telling their news to the group and recalling previous events. They are learning to be considerate when listening to others. Labelling of furniture and equipment and the use of name cards encourages the children to develop early reading skills and letter recognition. They recognise their names and are encouraged to find their own name for self-registration. Children had few opportunities to develop writing skills or develop their understanding of the use of writing as the structured day did not allow for free expression or, free choice of resources. Children did use a computer and are beginning to understand about technology.

There is documented evidence to show that staff can adapt learning to meet the needs of the individual child. This ensures that all children including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language are given appropriate consideration and support.

Children are encouraged to concentrate on activities but were bored and disinterested with those available, especially as they were not changed during the core hours that children attend. They are developing independence and have good self-esteem as they see to their own personal needs regarding using the toilet and accessing drinks. Staff do praise and encourage the children, but this is also patchy and not consistent. Staff did not make good use of time and resources but evidence from children's files and photographic evidence showed that staff observations, in the recent past, have been used to evaluate teaching.

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

The provision is good.

All children have access to the extensive range of resources and activities. Staff treat the children as individuals and ensure play activities are suited to children's specific levels of understanding. The excellent working relationships staff have formed with both parents and outside agencies means each child's abilities and needs have been recorded, documented and are regularly assessed. This ensures all children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, have their care needs met well. Positive relationships are formed and children are beginning to work well together, sharing and taking turns. They are generally well behaved, listen to others and welcome visitors into the setting in a confident and polite manner. Through the well-planned topics, children have many opportunities to engage in activities which enhance

their learning and understanding of the wider community and the world around them. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's understanding of appropriate behaviour is promoted well as permanent staff provide a positive environment, are consistent, use praise and encouragement freely and are calm in their approach to the children. There is a written behaviour management policy, which includes bullying, which works well and is fully understood and implemented by the staff. There is a designated staff member for behaviour management and the policy is regularly discussed to ensure it remains effective and is appropriate for the children.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. They are kept informed of their child's progress and development through daily exchange of information and by regular opportunities to meet with staff to discuss their child's progress throughout the year. Newsletters are provided for parents and carers monthly and give detailed information about forthcoming events and themes. All plans are also displayed and are cross referenced to 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. This gives parents a good picture of what the nursery has planned, what they are offering the children and why.

A parent pack is given to all parents and includes the philosophy of the nursery, policy statements and child protection information. Ofsted details are displayed at the entrance. Parents complete registration forms for all children with staff ensuring parents are aware of the consents required to provide a secure and safe environment. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved with their children's learning. They are invited to help in the nursery at any time, join the children on trips, share their knowledge of and discuss cultural events. There are regular 'Inspire' workshops which allow parents to work alongside their children and understand the activities the nursery provides. Parents expressed their satisfaction with the service provided and the commitment and caring attitude of the staff.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The nursery is mostly well organised and offers a child centred environment which effectively fosters children's development in most areas. Space and resources are usually well organised and permanent staff are committed to ensuring that the children's individual needs are met. There is a very relaxed, happy atmosphere throughout the nursery.

Communication between staff is good, which enables them to meet children's individual needs. The management team and cook assist at lunch time ensuring ratios are maintained. This ensures that the younger children continue to receive appropriate support and attention. Documentation is well organised and filed securely although the daily register is incomplete. A comprehensive set of policies and procedures firmly underpins and supports the practice throughout the nursery. However, agency staff's understanding of the nursery policies and procedures is poor.

There is a mostly stable staff group but, if permanent staff need to be recruited there are formal recruitment and vetting procedures in place to ensure those working with children would be suitable to do so. Training is given high priority and opportunities are discussed with staff on a regular basis to enhance the care given to the children. All permanent staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and they work very well as a team.

The leadership and management of the nursery is satisfactory. The management team set high standards for the staff to maintain but, some staff are not effective in their post and did not

display the same commitment and enthusiasm as others did. The management team work with the staff and children and understand how things work on a day to day level. They have a clear vision for the nursery education with a strong focus on children's personal development. All plans for the future are shared with the staff and staff are fully involved in the observations and assessments of children's learning. Strong support for staff is in place and training needs are identified as appropriate. The management team are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the setting and monitoring is done through regular observations of how each room is running. Staff's input into the planning process is valued and all staff contribute regularly. So, permanent staff have a good understanding of individual learning needs and ensure the nursery is fully inclusive for all children.

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

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

At the last inspection the provider was requested to improve the system in place to minimise identified hazards. The provider has improved the storage of resources which has minimised the potential hazards to children so children are protected.

### **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:

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 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 daily attendance registers include the times of arrival and departure of children and staff.

#### **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):

- improve the use of mathematical language in everyday activities

- improve opportunities for children to access writing implements and have a greater degree of freedom during art activities
- ensure all staff have the appropriate experience, skills and ability to do their jobs.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)