

Orchard Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	258406
Inspection date	06 February 2008
Inspector	Michelle W. Smith
Setting Address	92 Derby Road, Chellaston, Derby, Derbyshire, DE73 6RF
Telephone number	01332 703204
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Registered person	Orchard Private Day Nurseries Ltd
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Orchard Nursery School is run by Orchard Private Day Nurseries Limited. It opened in 2006 and is situated in Chellaston on the outskirts of Derby. A maximum of 45 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:00 throughout the year, except for bank holidays. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 68 children aged from two years and six months to four years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The setting employs 10 members of staff, eight of which work directly with the children. Of the staff members working directly with the children, six hold an appropriate early years qualification and two are working towards a qualification. In addition, the person in charge and deputy are working towards a degree in early years. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children's health is not adequately safeguarded. A written record of medicines administered to children is kept. However, parents do not sign the medical record book which details crucial information such as the time and measure of dose to acknowledge the entry. Staff are not sufficiently informed and aware of the importance of good hygiene practices. Although children follow hygiene routines such as hand washing as part of the daily routine, they do not always recognise, without the support of staff, why many good personal care routines are important. Consequently, children place their uncovered toothbrushes into their personal trays alongside everyday materials such as used paper and toys. On occasions, they drop food such as melons onto the floor, picking the fruit up off the floor and immediately eating it. This significantly increases the risk of the spread of illness and infection. Children are sufficiently safeguarded from reoccurring health issues as written notices about common concerns such as head lice are prominently displayed, so helping to limit any potential infestation. The system used for recording accidents is fully understood by all staff and all records contain sufficient detail such as the nature of the injury. In addition, more than half of the staff are trained to administer first aid, so helping any minor incidents to be dealt with effectively.

Children enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. A cook is employed to prepare and serve a wide range of midday meals such as lasagne with salad. Children eat many vegetables as the cook blends fresh produce into homemade sauces. Children receive positive encouragement from staff to taste a broad variety of foods and tell staff how much they have eaten at the end of their meal, commenting, for example, that they have 'eaten half' or 'tried a bit'. The dietary needs of all children are discussed with parents and recorded well, ensuring that any specific dietary requirements are met. The kitchen is effectively organised, for example, an internal catering manager completes a hygiene audit every three months, so helping to ensure food is safely cooked and prepared. Children have easy access to drinking water.

Children of all ages thoroughly enjoy playing in the delightful outdoor play area. They stop and start safely as they run whilst playing imaginative games, negotiating their individual pathway around resources. They queue patiently for their turn to jump over obstacles and clap as they knock down skittles. When using the grassed area, children can crawl through tunnels and climb on challenging fixed play equipment. Staff help to make outdoor learning fun as they bring an adequate selection of resources outside. Consequently, children draw using sheets of paper attached to easels and play with cars and garages in the open air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children's well-being and comfort during rest times is heavily compromised as they do not sleep on suitable equipment. Although children relax their head onto a pillow and have a blanket wrapped around them, they sleep directly on the carpeted floor. Children on the ground floor do not move freely and safely around the premises for large time periods within the day. They are cared for in groups which are too big and they are under stimulated. As a result, they often play unsafely with equipment, for example, they push cars speedily along a windowsill, releasing the car into the air and into the pathway of others. In addition, they often wander aimlessly around the rooms. This creates a chaotic environment which potentially increases the risk of accidents. Staff do complete safety check lists, so helping to ensure that equipment such as

emergency lighting is working effectively. Children take part in fire escape drills. However, the record of staff and children's attendance is not always accurate. This reduces the effectiveness of the emergency escape plan and limits children's safety in the event of a fire. The premises are secure which means that no unauthorised person is able to enter the setting and children are not able to leave the premises without supervision.

Children are safe on outings. Good systems are in place to ensure any vehicles used are in suitable working condition and appropriate insurance is in place for the company minibuses. The ratio of adults to children is increased when children go swimming and an outings folder contains emergency contact details for every child. Staff also carry mobile phones and a first aid kit, so helping them to continuously safeguard children when on trips.

Children's welfare is adequately protected because the setting has a clearly written child protection policy which is easy to understand and includes all of the relevant contact numbers. Staff are confident in their role to inform senior management if they have concerns about a child's welfare. Although the child protection policy has regard for Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures, the person in charge is not fully familiar with the recent changes to local and national guidance. The person in charge has acknowledged this weakness and is seeking training to ensure the procedures are further understood. The management team from other settings within the company work together to ensure sensitive and appropriate decisions are made to protect children in the event of a child protection concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

Children often move very quickly from activity to activity showing low levels of concentration. Staff plan the layout of the room and activities in line with the principles of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. However, they do not transform the principles of the framework into successful working practice. Children do show an interest in some of the activities provided. They eagerly roll dough into balls using the palms of their hands and make houses out of cardboard boxes. However, they are very easily distracted by inappropriate behaviour that is occurring around them and the activities are not adjusted to meet their individual needs. When children gather together to play with a shape game, they crowd around the table, tussling over pieces of equipment, often losing the motivation to learn as they move away from the disorganised game. In addition, children are removed from watching the television as they are seen to be 'corrupting the other children and being silly'. Staff often do little to immediately address the situation and to reflect on why children are disinterested, showing a weak understanding of the many ways in which children learn. This hinders children's ability to become involved in purposeful and meaningful play opportunities.

Some children enjoy sitting playing with other children and staff. They approach a child on a separate table who is sitting beside a till and a phone, and pretend to book an appointment at the hairdressers. Staff join in with the play as they pretend to wash children's hair. Children remain at the activity for a long period of time, taking turns to have their hair washed and playing with the imaginary shampoo bottles. Other children sit quietly with staff, leafing through books whilst talking about what they see. Children explore and experiment with a suitable range of materials. They use black and brown paint to represent the seeds and soil linked to growing cress and print patterns on large sheets of paper. They use their imagination freely as they care for their dolls, holding them close to their chest and place counters into a sieve, swirling them around using a fish slice.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Staff have insecure knowledge of the Foundation Stage. There are written activity plans which outline the basic learning intention for the week. However, these activities are not tailored to meet the needs of the children attending and they do not always take place, as the room is disorganised, for example, matching cards and fuzzy felt are knocked off table tops and remain sprawled over the floor. Consequently, children show little respect for the play environment. They become bored, lying listless on the floor or become very energetic as they run around the room. Staff gather children together in groups with the intention of sharing stories. However, staff do not capture the interest of the children before starting the activity. As a result, children soon lose interest, fidget and redirect their attention towards other activities, for example, they play with their shoe fastenings. Staff continue to read the words of the story but, also manage the children's behaviour at the same time by telling children what not to do. This creates a negative learning environment and greatly hinders children's progression through the Foundation Stage. On occasions, the environment is much more conducive to learning as children are cared for in smaller groups or flow freely between indoors and outside. Staff take the time to sit with small groups of children to read stories and play mathematical games such as matching. Children sit down at tables, play happily with aeroplanes and make cards for special people, whilst talking to staff about significant events. However, during activities and conversations, staff tend to favour closed questioning techniques which prevents topics of conversation from extending further. This limits children's ability to experiment with language and to restricts the development of their language for thinking and communicating. Staff do make some sporadic observations of children's learning but, these written records do not give a clear picture of their progress. In addition, staff do not use the limited information recorded and their informal knowledge of the children to inform future plans. Overall, children are making insufficient progress towards the early learning goals. Staff are unable to continuously implement a successful programme of activities which ensure the breadth of the curriculum is provided with appropriate challenges for all children.

Children are developing an adequate level of personal independence within daily routines, for example, they put on their own coats in readiness for outdoor play and scrape their own plates after their midday meal. They make many choices about where they wish to play. On occasions, children concentrate well on their chosen task and show pride in their own achievement, keenly showing the inspector a card they have completed. However, they do not sit quietly and concentrate for much of the time because there is a very high noise level in the room. When children do have the confidence to speak in a large group, their comments are often overlooked or they are told to 'shhh'. This demonstrates that staff have low expectations of children and that the environment does not challenge and value children as individuals.

Children sometimes enjoy writing for a purpose as they stand beside tables to write and draw. In addition, wall displays show that children write meaningfully, for example, they write captions to detail information about the fish. Some children find space to enjoy books for pleasure as they sit with familiar friends, holding the book whilst they say 'now listen children here is a story'. They competently use scissors to cut pieces of cardboard. When children use the 'messy room' they have free access to sensory materials which enable them to explore and experiment with resources such as shells in jelly. Children who are based on the ground floor show an interest in technology as they work well together when they are using the computer. They move the mouse with increasing levels of competence and begin to take turns and change the colours of characters on the computer screen. However, children have less access to technology when they are based on the first floor. This limits their understanding of the many uses of information and communication technology within everyday lives.

Children show little interest in text, problem solving and numeracy. On occasions, they sit with staff to count the amount of bugs on a card and use their fingers to name one item for each object they count. When playing outdoors, children line in groups as they prepare to come indoors, counting the number of children present and lining up by familiar numerals such as one and five. However, children do not use numbers spontaneously as they play and do not solve mathematical problems through calculation and everyday occurrences. The curriculum plans show that there is a 'letter of the week' but, when children are prompted by staff to look at letter sounds such as 'g' for 'goat' they do not listen or respond. This demonstrates that at times learning is mundane.

Children enjoy singing familiar songs whilst they clap their hands to represent rhythm and beat. They take part in regular dance sessions, led by an external visitor where they express their imagination through movement. In addition, they further their balancing and climbing skills as they visit the local soft play centre. Children regularly go swimming, so helping them to gain confidence with water activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Children on the ground floor play in a largely negative learning environment. They move chaotically around the room, often fighting or tussling over equipment. Staff take little immediate action to rectify the situation and on occasions, use loud voices as they tell children not to fight. This demonstrates that staff have a weak understanding of why children are not complying with the necessary rules and the many ways in which children learn. The person in charge has recently introduced a star chart system as she has recognised children's behaviour is not being managed successfully. However, the star chart system and praise are not being used consistently by staff to promote good behaviour. This reduces children's self-esteem as they are unclear of the boundaries and are under stimulated for much of the time. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not fostered. Children on the first floor behave well for much of the time. However, staff do not always take into consideration children's level of understanding when applying behavioural boundaries and do not reflect on why inappropriate behaviour is occurring. Children are often told what not to do such as 'do not put the play dough in your mouth' rather than staff explaining why the behaviour is unacceptable. Consequently, children do not develop self-discipline.

Children learn about diversity through a sound range of planned projects about celebrations and festivals. They taste foods such as noodles and prawn crackers when learning about Chinese New Year. Through dressing up in Sari's and listening to the story of Rama and Sita, children begin to learn about Diwali and the traditional Asian culture. On occasions, children learn to share with their friends and to show respect. They sit in a circle, passing a soft ball to each other, naming their friends and clapping joyously. There are suitable procedures in place, reflective of the Code of Practice, to ensure children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported appropriately.

Friendly and open relationships with parents ensure that children's individual care needs are known. Staff show an adequate knowledge of each child's requirements, for example, they know which children enjoy a midday sleep and for how long. Parents are suitably informed about their child's care through daily discussions with staff. In addition, they are able to view the policies and procedures that underpin the running of the setting at any time as they are prominently displayed in the entrance foyer. The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is satisfactory. All parents are given a booklet when

their child starts to attend the setting which outlines the six areas of learning within the Foundation Stage. In addition, the written curriculum plans for the week are displayed on an information board. Parents are able to access their own child's assessment and progress file with great ease. However, the systems used to plan children's learning and to track their progress are poorly implemented. Consequently, many assessment files do not give parents a true reflection of their child's unique learning journey. This hinders children's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. This is because the setting has breached regulatory requirements. For a continuous period, the setting has been caring for more children than their conditions of registration permit. This is a breach of their conditions of registration. The setting has not formally informed Ofsted as the regulator of significant events, this refers to the change of person in charge. This is a breach of regulations and limits the effectiveness in which the suitability of the new manager can be verified. A daily record is kept of the names of the children looked after on the premises. However, the record which shows children's hours of attendance is not always accurate. A record is kept of most of the names of the persons who looked after children. However, not all staff record when they have been present at the setting. This is a breach of mandatory requirements. The childcare practice is not good enough which significantly compromises children's welfare and development.

Children do not receive a high level of individual attention when they play on the ground floor of the premises because the size of the group is too big. At times, they do split into separate groups and flow freely between two rooms or between indoor and outdoor play. On these occasions, children benefit from a much calmer and less chaotic learning environment. Good use is not made of resources to support children's comfort as they sleep and although children are able to access many toys at any one time, staff do not fully understand how to make the most of resources to fully stimulate children's learning and care throughout the day.

The management team ensure adequate vetting procedures are in place for all staff except the person in charge, so helping to ensure that staff members are generally suitable to work with children. All policies that govern the practice in the setting have recently been reviewed and the new person in charge has implemented a system where staff read a policy a week. Staff then sign a record to say they have read and understand the designated policy. However, staff are not successfully implementing many of the written documents into consistent working practice, for example, the behaviour management policy, medication records and hygiene procedures all fall short of the required standards. This has a negative impact on the care children receive.

Leadership and management of early education is inadequate. A new person in charge has been appointed to oversee the management of the setting. Although she has many good ideas about how to further improve the quality of education, the current programme for delivering, monitoring and evaluating the curriculum is ineffective which results in an unacceptable standard of education. This heavily compromises children's learning. The person in charge has identified some aspects of weak practice and has been working with the local authority to improve the quality of care.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to ensure parents sign the record of all medicines administered to children and to ensure the system for registering children shows the hours of attendance. The record of medicines administered to children is actively completed. However, parents do not always sign the record book to acknowledge the entry. This remains an area for improvement and, as a result, will be carried forward following this inspection. The system for registering children's attendance is not completed accurately to show their actual hours of attendance which compromises their safety. Consequently, this remains an area for improvement and an action will be carried forward following this inspection.

The setting was also asked to update the procedures to be followed in the event of a parent or carer failing to collect a child and to ensure the child protection statement includes the procedure to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer. An uncollected child policy now details procedures for staff to follow should a parent fail to collect a child. In addition, the child protection policy has been amended to include procedures for staff to follow should a colleague be alleged of abuse. This helps to safeguard children in the event of a child protection concern or if a child is not collected.

At the last education inspection the setting was asked to ensure more able children are encouraged to solve mathematical problems in routines and incidental situations. This remains an area for improvement following this inspection as children do not problem solve in routine or everyday situations which limits their mathematical development. The setting was also asked to provide more opportunities for children to initiate their own creative work and develop their creative ideas. Children now develop their unique creativity as they have regular access to glue, paint and other materials when playing in the 'messy room' and outdoors.

The setting was also asked as to enhance children's understanding of different cultures and beliefs by further integrating this into the planned educational curriculum. A section of the ground floor play room has now been established as an area where children can learn about diversity through resources, for example, electronic globes. However, their learning is not consolidated as staff do not spend time talking with the children about the resources they see and use. This limits their learning about worldwide issues. An action has been raised following this inspection to ensure the breath of the curriculum is covered by curriculum plans.

At the last education inspection the setting was asked to develop opportunities for parents to become more involved in their child's learning. Parents are now asked to support their child's learning by bringing resources from home which are linked to themes such as 'the dentist'. In addition, some parents have been asked to share what they know about their child's development by completing a questionnaire. However, the information gained from the questionnaires is not used as an active tool to plan children's next steps in learning. This limits children's progress through the stepping stones as the setting does not fully value the role of parents as joint educators.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 Ofsted has received one complaint relating to: National Standard 1 - Suitable Person; National Standard 6 - Safety; National Standard 7 - Health; National Standard 11 - Behaviour; National Standard 13 - Child Protection and National Standard 14 - Documentation. The initial concerns were referred to an outside agency who took no further action. An Inspector from Ofsted's Children's Directorate conducted a visit in May 2007 to investigate the concerns. As a result of the visit the provider was asked to demonstrate how systems will be reviewed to

ensure staff actively adhere to the policies and procedures and to demonstrate how Ofsted will be notified about allegations of abuse by a member of staff and any other significant events. The provider supplied a satisfactory response to the actions. Ofsted was satisfied that by taking these steps the provider met the National Standards. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- notify Ofsted in writing about any changes to the person in charge
- ensure the daily record of the names of children looked after on the premises, their hours of attendance and the names of the persons who looked after them is accurate
- make sure the size of a group never exceeds 26 children and ensure space on the ground floor is organised to meet children's needs effectively
- ensure staff manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development (this also applies to nursery education)
- plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, social and intellectual capabilities
- ensure the premises are suitable for their purpose; this refers to ensuring the provision made for children who wish to sleep is equipped with appropriate furniture
- ensure children's good health is promoted; this refers to ensuring parents sign the record of any medicines administered to acknowledge the entry and to making sure staff are informed and aware of the importance of good hygiene practices in relation to food handling and the storage of toothbrushes.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage

- ensure staff use conversations, carefully framed questioning and consolidation techniques to challenge children's thinking throughout all activities
- implement a rigorous planning system to ensure the breath of the Foundation Stage curriculum is provided with appropriate challenges for all children
- ensure the system for monitoring, evaluating and assessing children's learning is used to effectively support children's next steps in learning.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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