

Carealot Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	402191
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Registered person	Carealot 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 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Carealot Nursery is run by an informal partnership. It opened in 1999 and operates from a self-contained building within the grounds of St Peters College, Chelmsford. A maximum of 32 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 52 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 25 children aged under five years on roll. Of these, 10 receive funding for early education. Children come from both the local and wider catchment area.

The nursery employs six staff, of these five, including the manager hold appropriate qualifications. Three staff are working towards a qualification or higher qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

The children are exposed to the risk of cross-infection because staff do not take positive action to promote the children's understanding of good health and hygiene practices. The older children wash their hands before eating and good visual clues in the bathroom remind them to wash their hands after using the toilet. However, the children in the under two-year-old room do not wash their hands or have their hands washed before eating. The children's many runny noses are often not wiped and staff do not encourage children to cover their mouths when they frequently cough and sneeze.

Staff implement the nursery health and hygiene policies and procedures adequately. For example, clear notices in the changing areas ensure staff always use disposable gloves when changing nappies and clean the changing mats with anti-bacterial spray after each use.

The children are provided with a main mid-day meal cooked in the school kitchen. Environmental health recommendations are followed to ensure that the food is transferred appropriately to the nursery such as recording food temperatures and using insulated boxes. The children are encouraged to try different foods such as roasted Mediterranean vegetables and pulses in their casserole. They are also delighted when it is Friday 'chip day'. The children enjoy a range of snacks and afternoon teas prepared on the nursery premises which are overall balanced to meet their nutritional needs. The weekly menu is displayed in the reception area so that parents and carers are aware of what their child has been offered to eat. A daily record for the under two-year-old children ensures that parents and carers are well informed of what their child has eaten. The older children have independent access to drinking water throughout the day but the younger children only have drinks with their meals. This means that the younger, less vocal children are not able to drink when they are thirsty.

The younger children's physical development is promoted well as they climb up, over and through a small indoor climbing frame and in and out of a sit-in boat. The older children enthusiastically move all of their bodies as they dance along to music tapes during their daily movement sessions. All children benefit from fresh air when they go outside during scheduled times throughout the day. They develop their strength and co-ordination as they use the climbing frame and show good spatial awareness as they confidently scoot around on the sit and ride toys.

Children's health and dietary needs are met appropriately because all the required documentation is in place. For example, parents and carers record allergies and medical conditions on the children's registration forms and appropriate systems are in place to ensure this information is shared with all staff. There are a number of staff who are qualified to administer first aid to ensure the children are treated appropriately in any such emergency.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Overall, the premises are not well maintained and clean in all areas. This poses a risk to the children's good health and well-being. While the children's playrooms are generally clean the high ceilings contain large and dirty cobwebs above areas where the children play, sleep and eat. Cobwebs, worn surfaces and pipes and flaking paint in the staff and children's bathrooms

indicate that these areas are not and cannot be cleaned thoroughly. Children's and staff's good health is also compromised by only being able to wash their hands in cold water as the water heating boiler is currently broken.

Children are not able to leave the premises and unauthorised person are not able to gain access to the children because the premises are secure. Appropriate policies and procedures are implemented to keep the children safe such as checks on visitors and collection of the children is only permitted if authorised by parents or carers. Additional safety policies and procedures such as an intruder policy further enhance the children's safety. The children practise fire drills regularly so that they know what to do in a real emergency. Fire detection and prevention equipment is maintained and fire procedures are displayed clearly for all to see so that no one hinders the safe evacuation of children from the premises. However, the children's safety is compromised by the storage of toys and equipment in the narrow access to the fire door in the under two-year-old room.

The children are able to play and eat together because there is sufficient child sized furniture. The younger children benefit from a separate sleep room where they sleep peacefully in their cots. Children use an adequate range of clean and well maintained toys and resources which are appropriate for their stage of development. The older children's independence skills are fostered as much of the play equipment in their room is stored at low level so they can choose things for themselves.

The children's awareness of their own safety is promoted through everyday routines. For example, they know that they should not run inside as they may hurt themselves or others. They learn about safety when out of the nursery when they go for walks and when they work on topics such as fire safety.

Children are safeguarded because all staff are aware of their responsibilities with regard to protecting children. There is a safeguarding children policy and all staff are aware of this and are confident they would act in line with this to protect the children in their care. The staff maintain regular, informal communication with parents and carers which develops strong partnerships between all those involved in keeping children safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

The youngest children's ongoing development is not planned for effectively because the staff in the under two-year-old room do not make regular observations of the children and record what the children can already do and know, to enable them to build on this. The two to three-year-old children in the nursery room do benefit from staff making notes of their achievements to help them plan for the next steps in their learning. For these children, the 'Birth to three matters' framework is used well to help them develop through their play.

The children act confidently in the environment because they are familiar with the nursery routines. For example, a young child says 'put chair away' after lunch and stacks it well in the reception area. The children generally show interest in what they do such as throwing and rolling graded and textured balls or playing in the role play shop and home corner. The younger children are particularly excited by a sticking activity as they explore the glue sticks and paper shapes. However, at times the choice of activities for the younger children is rather limited. The older children are able to concentrate at activities such as snap with adult support.

The children build trusting relationships with the staff which promotes their sense of security and well-being. The younger children's communication and language skills are fostered well as they talk with their carers and share books and rhymes. The older children enjoy everyday conversation with staff and confidently talk about their experiences, family and friends.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn is sufficient. The programme of activities is generally well planned to ensure the long and short term learning curriculum includes a broad and balanced range of activities and experiences across the six areas of learning. It also allows children to return to ideas and concepts and consolidate their ideas through different experiences. For example, they make collages of the world and talk about where they live in one week and the following week they revisit the map of the world to learn about China and the Chinese New Year celebrations. This also demonstrates well thought out progression for the children's learning.

The indoor learning environment and programme of activities generally meets the need of the children attending. However, both lack challenge and stimulation for the more able children. Further development of the outdoor area also has the potential to enable all children to learn on a larger scale than is possible indoors and to enable their different learning styles to be met more effectively.

The teaching of different areas of learning is generally good and helps the children become focused, able to resist distractions and persist for some time. For example, the children listen attentively to a story about the tradition of Chinese New Year before going off to design and make their own 'year of the rat' masks. They then confidently tell a visitor how, when the masks are dry, they will use them. Staff use both planned and spontaneous events to support the children's learning and demonstrate their understanding of the individual children as they guide and direct their learning through conversation and example.

The children become increasingly independent in carrying out daily routines. They manage appropriate tasks such as hanging up their own belongings on their pegs and removing their shoes and putting on them on the racks before donning their Wellington boots for outdoor play. The children also seek out others to play with when organising games such as pretend play in the home corner. The children learn to care and for each other, their environment and living things. For example, they share, tidy up and look after the nursery gerbils.

The children are developing appropriate language and literacy skills. They make marks when making shopping lists in the shop and while painting. The children learn to recognise their names when they hang up their coats on their named pegs and see their names on the sticker chart. The children see a range of writing around them such as in posters, notices, labels and books which help them learn that words have meaning. Some of the more able children are beginning to recognise letters and sounds. Children enjoy listening to stories and looking at books with staff.

Children develop simple mathematical concepts as they use number in their everyday play. For example, they count how many things they have in their shopping basket and how many children are at the table. They learn about measurement as they compare full and empty buckets of water and make long lines with cars.

The children being to make sense of the world around them as they investigate a range of ideas through everyday routines and planned topics. For example, they talk about the changes in the weather and the months and seasons of the year. They learn that plants need water and light to make them grow. They notice the changes to raw ingredients when cooked during cooking activities. The children are provided with a range of opportunities to use simple tools such as scissors, sticky tape dispensers and hole punches which promotes their fine motor skills. The children use the computer to develop their confidence in using Information and Communication Technology.

Children express their creativity through a range of art and craft activities. They use their imaginations freely during pretend play such as playing mummies and daddies in the home corner and setting up the garage and cars; talking about their experiences both real and imagined.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are all given an individual greeting when they arrive which helps them feel welcome. They develop a sense of belonging to the nursery as they see photographs of themselves around them and their artwork is displayed. The children are encouraged to take an active part in the nursery through daily activities such as taking messages to staff and having choices about what they do through free play and self-selection.

The youngest children develop their blossoming social skills as they are encouraged to play alongside each other and to join in small group activities by the warm and caring staff. As the children grow they develop positive relationships with their peers and play amicably together. The children learn how to share, take turns and to negotiate verbally with each other and the staff. The children learn about emotions and how others feel through their daily routines and planned topics. Such experiences help the children put into words their own feelings and develops concern for others.

The children are encouraged to show care and respect for others. For example, the children are encouraged to 'show and tell' at group times and learn to listen to each other. The children take walks into their local environment where they learn about their immediate community. The children also take part in celebrations of world festivals so that they begin to develop an understanding of our differences and similarities. The children use an adequate range of toys and resources which reflect diversity and help children appreciate the wider world and people in it. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

There are appropriate systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is an appropriately trained Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator who is able to work with parents and carers, other staff and any outside agencies to develop appropriate learning programmes for the children.

Staff provide parents and carers with clear information about the nursery and its aims and objectives which provides reassurance to all new families. Appropriate settling-in policies and procedures enable children and their families to take the difficult step of separation and foster a smooth transition from home to nursery life. Discussion prior to placement provides valuable opportunities to share information about the children's individual needs so that consistency of care can be offered. Ongoing communication is promoted well through daily verbal exchanges and the information displayed in the reception area and nursery rooms. Parents and carers

spoken to at this inspection are complimentary of the staff and nursery and are happy with the care provided.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funded education is satisfactory. Information about the educational programme is provided to parents and carers before their children start in the nursery class and is clearly displayed on numerous notice boards throughout the premises. This ensures that parents and carers are well informed about how their children develop and learn through their play. In addition, parents and carers share information about their children's progress and achievements through daily conversation with staff and at key worker meetings. Up and coming learning themes and curriculum planning is displayed so that children's learning in nursery can be supported at home by their parents and carers.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The children's safety is compromised because the registration system does not accurately reflect the children's daily hours of attendance. For example, children are missed off the register and they are not always shown as having gone home. Therefore it is not a reliable record of the children's presence and is a potential risk to children because in the event of a fire staff would not be able to account for all the children.

While staff to child ratios are met the deployment of staff is not always effective and results in young children being left unsupervised. This compromises the children's safety and well-being.

The children are protected because there are appropriate systems in place to ensure adults working with the children are suitable to do so and hold the required early years qualifications. Recruitment and induction procedures are in place and ensure that all staff are aware of working practices in the nursery. There is an ongoing system for staff appraisal which includes future professional development plans which fosters staff and nursery development.

Policies and procedures are in place which outline the nursery practices and all the required documentation is maintained for the day-to-day management of the provision. Overall children's needs are not met.

Leadership and management of the funded nursery education is satisfactory. The registered providers monitor the nursery funded learning programme and are active in seeking advice and support from the Early Years Partnership. The providers demonstrate their confidence in the skills and team work of the nursery room staff by giving them responsibility for the planning and delivery of the funded nursery education programme. More formal systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the nursery curriculum has the potential to identify the strengths of the learning programme and areas for further improvement.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the provision has undertaken a number of measures to make improvements in the care and education of the children. A new member of staff has been appointed and there is also a bank member of staff to cover for staff leave, illness and emergencies. This ensures that the required adult to child ratios are maintained at all times. The operational plan has been updated to include how the staff will be deployed in the provision, how the ongoing training needs of the staff will be met and what activities the children will be provided with. This ensures that parents and carers are well informed of who cares for their

children, what training they will be attending to update their skills and knowledge in caring for the children and how and what their children are learning at nursery.

The children's health has been improved because the setting have now complied with the environmental health and food safety standards recommendations with regard to repairs and hygiene standards in the kitchen. The children's safety has also been improved by a risk assessment now being in place which identifies risks and hazards both inside and outside the premises and on outings. There are now four members of staff who are trained in first aid to enable at least one qualified member of staff to be on the premises and on outings at any one time.

The partnership with parents and carers and the children's good health has also been improved through the nursery obtaining written parental consent for the seeking of any emergency medical advice or treatment. This ensures that children's medical needs can be dealt with promptly in an emergency.

The children are safeguarded because now there is a designated member of staff who has attended appropriate child protection training. The nursery has also updated their safeguarding children policy to include all the necessary information to enable them to act on any concerns promptly and appropriately therefore protecting children from risk of harm.

Since the last inspection the staff have also worked on improving the quality of the funded nursery education. The staff now include use of key questions and associated vocabulary on the activity plans which prompts them to foster the children's language and reasoning skills. The curriculum planning also shows how individual children will be supported. However, there is still room for further improvement with regard to providing sufficient challenge for the more able children.

Children are now provided with many opportunities to write for a purpose. For example, they make lists and letters during role play activities and use clipboards to record information as they move around the room. The children work out simple sums as they calculate how many or less they will need such as when they sing number rhymes or work out how many chairs are needed. The nursery are continuing to develop their range of simple technology toys that can be used during everyday play.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint. In November 2007 concerns were raised regarding allegations that a child received scratches near the eyes, the setting's response to the scratches when the issue was raised, the child being picked on by other children at the setting and children being grabbed by the arm by members of staff and placed in the baby room when they misbehave. These concerns relate to National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 6: Safety, National Standard 7: Health, National Standard 11: Behaviour and National Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers. In order to investigate these concerns Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit. As a result of this visit Ofsted can confirm that National Standard 2, National Standard 6, National Standard 11 and National Standard 12 were being met. However, an action was set under National Standard 7, to ensure that all entries into the accident records are countersigned by parents or carers. The provider addressed this action within the set timescale. 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.

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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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that the good health of children is promoted and positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection, this refers to encouraging all children to learn about their own personal hygiene
- ensure that children are provided with regular drinks, this refers to making fresh drinking water available to all children at all times
- ensure that the premises are clean and maintained in a suitable state of repair and decoration and ensure that fire doors are not obstructed
- ensure that staff observe and record what children do and use their observations to plan the next steps for the children's play, learning and development; this also refers to nursery education
- ensure the registration system for children's attendance shows all children hours of attendance
- ensure that staff are deployed effectively within the premises to ensure the safety, welfare and development of the children.

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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve the use of the outdoor area so that children are enabled to learn by working on a larger, more active scale than indoors and to meet their individual learning styles more effectively
- further develop the planning of the learning environment and programme of activities to ensure they are motivating and challenging particularly in regard to the more able children
- improve systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the funded nursery education curriculum.

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