

# Cherry Tree Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	219109
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 January 2008
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<b>Registered person</b>	Child Base Limited
<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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Cherry Tree Day Nursery first opened in September 1996. The nursery is privately owned, and is one of 34 day care provisions operating under the auspices of Child Base, a national day care chain.

The nursery occupies a converted house located on the University Campus site of Cranfield, a rural village on the outskirts of Bedford. There are four main teaching rooms, which are used for differing age groups. The under two's are located upstairs with an area for mobile and non-mobile children. The over two's are divided into two separate age groups downstairs with the four year olds having direct access to the garden. There is also a separate garden area for the under two's.

Cherry Trees Day Nursery is registered to provide care for a total of 43 children aged nought to five years. The setting offers both sessional and full day care, opening between the hours of 07.30 until 18.30 with core opening hours between 08.00 until 18.00 five days a week, 52 weeks of the year.

Children attend from both local and wider geographical areas. The nursery also provides care for children of university students.

At present there are 75 children on roll. Of these 18 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery can support children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, and currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 17 staff 11 of whom, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff are working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment. There are effective daily hygiene practices which minimise the spread of infection and promote children's health, for example, staff wear gloves and aprons when serving meals and when changing nappies. Children's immediate welfare is effectively promoted as staff are qualified in first aid and comprehensive policies regarding medication, accidents and sick children are in place. Children with specific health issues have their medication stored in individual containers clearly labelled ensuring the location is immediately known should action be needed. Children are developing a good understanding of the importance of hygiene practices, for example, they wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Their independence is also developing as they are encouraged to wipe their noses and dispose of the tissue appropriately after use.

Children's special requirements with regard to health and diet are very well documented. Staff ensure that children's dietary requirements are strictly observed and have developed clear procedures including giving children with specific dietary needs a red plate alerting all staff to their particular requirements. Children are offered healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. These are prepared on the premises on a daily basis using fresh ingredients and include a balanced range of all food types. Children's independence is encouraged further as they help give out the plates for lunch and serve up their own meals and drinks. They are becoming aware of healthy foods by, for example, growing their own cress, runner beans and broad beans hopefully to be eaten at a later stage. They also enjoy cooking activities where they experience weighing and measuring different ingredients whilst making for example, Christmas cakes and pizza.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities which contribute to their good health and help develop control of their bodies whilst improving their physical skills and coordination. Daily physical activities linked to the Sound Foundations programme taking place throughout the nursery include obstacle courses, balancing beams and riding on bikes and scooters. Older children enjoy rolling balls down a pipe, catching them in a bucket and exploring the garden area digging with sand, stones and soil. Younger children enjoy climbing up the slide and using the sit and ride toys. Children have many opportunities to develop fine manipulative control and coordination through using a varied range of implements such as pencils, paint brushes and play dough cutters. The developmental needs of younger children are clearly understood and promoted because staff have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Children are encouraged to reach for items through holistic play where they experience ladles, net scrunchies and screwed-up paper. Children enjoy watching tissue paper floating from above them and trying to catch it.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment where their work is creatively displayed and resources are well organised and easily accessible. Their safety is viewed as paramount and staff carry out daily safety checks, identifying any hazards and taking positive steps to remove or minimise them. For example, floors are immediately swept when sand is spilt ensuring that the children do not slip and there are safety gates in place preventing unsupervised access to the stairs. Children are very well protected as staff are security conscious, making sure that all external doors are secure and diligently checking all visitors. Clear procedures regarding lost and uncollected children provide further protection. Children have a good understanding about taking responsibility and keeping themselves and others safe. They are consistently given clear explanations and reminders by staff, for example, on how to use their 'walking feet' when they start running inside and to keep both feet on the floor when younger children try to climb on a chair therefore preventing them from falling over. Children's understanding is further promoted as they participate in Child Safety Week enjoying visits from the local police force and fire department that talked to them about road safety and let them use the fire engine's hose.

Children's safety is further promoted through the provision of appropriate equipment such as correctly sized chairs and tables. They are able to select toys and activities from a range of good quality resources. Staff ensure that these are stored appropriately with picture or word labels on the drawers and boxes helping children independently choose what they want to play with. Toys and equipment are checked regularly ensuring that they are clean and suitable for the children to use.

Children's welfare is suitably promoted as staff attend mandatory child protection training on joining the company and also attend regular update sessions within the nursery. The children are very much the main priority and contact numbers for reporting concerns are available around the setting.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled, enjoying their time at the nursery. They are keen to participate in the activities and play opportunities provided. All children are confident in their relationships with each other and with staff, happily looking to them for support and reassurance as they need it. They happily chat to staff sharing information from home and about their families. For example, discussing the fact that they have had a new bathroom fitted with a shower and that even after washing their hair 'it stayed the same colour - red!' Children's work and photos are displayed, helping them to feel valued, secure and confident within the setting. Babies and children settle well and are secure in their relationships with staff because of the effective settling-in procedure and key-worker system within the nursery. This enables parents and staff to discuss the appropriate level of care for each child ensuring that all have their individual needs met.

Careful planning of activities for all age groups ensures that children are consistently offered a range of opportunities, which are linked to their individual needs and capabilities, thus ensuring the promotion of all areas of development. Staff assess children and note any areas which require further work and support, planning appropriate activities and ensuring that development is balanced. However, children's development files are not always kept up to date and therefore their progress is not always clear. Staff make good use of open questions when working with

the children, making the most of opportunities to extend their learning and encourage them to think further. For example, whilst playing with the toy cars staff ask 'what colour is that?' and 'Is it a fast car?' to which the children reply 'Yellow. My daddy has a yellow car'. Good use is made of the whole nursery providing stimulating areas in which the children play with enthusiasm including the messy play areas. During a messy play session younger children enjoy painting their part of a Chinese dragon using their hands to spread the paint onto the box as well onto the floor, themselves and anything else close by.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress and their overall development is promoted because staff have a good knowledge of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage, planning and adapting activities appropriately. Children's progress in all areas is well balanced as staff use good methods for assessing them. However, as children's observation records are not always continually updated their progress is not easily identified, potentially leading to a lack of challenge and further progression. Planning of activities is practical and thorough and staff check that all areas of learning are covered across the funded period.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which include opportunities to participate in role play, crafts, construction and physical play. Staff use their experience and knowledge to ensure that children are purposefully occupied and stimulated. Children are aware of the opportunities offered and are able to feel involved in the daily activities as they are given choices about which resources to use and which areas of the room to play in. For example, children choose to play on the computer. They select which program to play and then navigate the mouse through the different screens.

Children are confident and try new activities with enthusiasm and interest such as when making a bird cake. They confidently cut up the different ingredients asking for other pieces of fruit or bread when they have run out. They all eagerly take their turn discussing the next steps of the process and how they needed to wait for the cook to give them the fat to pour onto the dry ingredients. They have a clear understanding of their own needs and are confident in meeting them independently using the bathroom and pouring their drinks at snack time. They have good relationships with their peers and with staff, listening carefully to instructions and supporting each other in their play. When a traffic-light lamp is turned on for tidy up time they encourage each other by saying 'It's still green. We're doing quite well.' They learn new vocabulary throughout the day and speak with growing confidence and control. They enjoy story time interacting with staff and discussing the story as they go along. Whilst reading a story about feelings they talk about how they would feel if their toy was broken and then make angry faces demonstrating just this. Children then enthusiastically tell the story to each other later in the day. They make good use of the opportunities to write using jotter pads and envelopes to make 'a letter for my mummy and daddy'. The written word is effectively promoted throughout the setting encouraging the children to look at, for example, their family books with photographs of themselves and their family members and relate these to the written names underneath.

Children enjoy counting and using mathematical language in their daily play and conversations such as discussing how old they are and putting up their hand to indicate that they are either three or four years old. They also enjoy rolling the dice, counting the number of spots shown and then matching them to the numbers whilst playing dominoes. They are learning to recognise shape and size as they discuss the different sizes of birds and discuss everyday shapes

around them when, for example, they make a snowman at Christmas. They are starting to use calculation confidently stating that 'We need five chairs on this table. We have four already so need another one to make the five.' Children have a good appreciation and understanding of the natural world, promoted through, for example themed topics about under the ground where they enjoy a visit from Zoo Lab where they get to see a giant snake and gerbil. They enjoy many opportunities to investigate and experiment as they drop different items into water seeing if they float or sink and watch ice snowmen melting over a period of time and learning that heat makes the ice melt. They develop their construction skills by using different building resources and use tools confidently when, for example, scraping the 'gloop' on the table. Their use of Information technology is developing as they confidently use the computer and Bee-bop remote control toy.

Children's physical development is actively promoted. They enjoy music and movement sessions learning to stretch and warm up their muscles correctly and are particularly enthusiastic about a yoga session that takes place within the nursery. They move confidently around the setting, negotiating the furniture and allowing each other space to sit down in comfort. They learn control of their bodies as they, for example, play a traffic light game stopping on red, walking on amber and running around when green is called. Their fine manipulative skills are developed through exploring different mediums and activities such as chalking their name and a picture of a 'Tardis' on the outside easel, potato printing and experiencing sand, lentil and rice play. Children enthusiastically develop their imagination skills by using the hand puppets, small world resources and role play area to express their thoughts. They develop use of their senses through, for example, listening to different types of music and describing if it makes them happy or sad with children stating 'bad bangs make me sad!'

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

The provision is good.

All children are able to feel welcome and comfortable because staff value and respect their individuality and take care in getting to know them and their routines. Most children are offered a wide range of opportunities which promote their understanding of society and increase their awareness of other cultures and ways of life. These include celebrations of world festivals such as Diwali when the children make rangoli patterns and taste naan bread and chapattis. Children can also play with resources including dolls, books and play figures reflecting the diverse society in which we live. However, this range is limited for the younger children at the nursery. Children also learn about other languages as some signs around the nursery are written in French and Spanish.

Children are kind and considerate to each other and to staff. Their behaviour is good as staff use appropriate strategies such as reasoning and positive praise. They are given clear explanations about the boundaries in place and know what is expected of them, for example, that they need to put an apron on before messy play as 'we'll get wet'. Written rules such as 'we shall use kind words and hands to our friends and teachers' also promote positive behaviour. Children are also learning to take responsibility for their own actions. When younger children momentarily forget to share their toys they are sensitively and calmly reminded 'we have to share don't we?'. Children respond very well to staff, and the positive approach and effective staff role modelling ensures that children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their requirements identified and met as there is a clear policy relating to this. Staff ensure that this is implemented, working with individual children and parents to make sure that all are included in the activities and daily routines. Staff are skilled in ensuring that all children are able to participate at a level

appropriate to them and are offered activities and opportunities which reflect their needs and abilities and promote their development.

The quality of the setting's partnership with parents and carers is good. They are given clear information about the setting when their child starts and as an ongoing process throughout the child's time at the nursery. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress through topical displays, newsletters, regular discussions with staff and parents' evenings. There are informative notice boards containing information about a number of issues including the weekly menu and the complaint's procedure. Parents are also able to access clear information about the 'Birth to three matters' publication as it is displayed throughout the nursery. For parents of children in receipt of early education, displays relating to the six areas of learning and the Curriculum for the foundation stage are easily accessible and informative. Parents are actively encouraged in becoming involved in their child's learning. Stay and play sessions enable parents to see what their child is doing and how the end results are achieved. Particular favourites are the Mother's and Father's day breakfasts when parents shared some time with their child before heading off to work. The weekly activity sheets also encourage parents to continue their child's development at home by giving ideas on how the activity can be extended. Parents are also invited to participate in the Parent's Forum and in the completion of a Parent's questionnaire. This positive attitude ensures that parents' views are valued, standards are maintained and high quality care is provided for each child.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Overall, children's needs are met. Their play opportunities are greatly enhanced by the good organisation of space enabling them to experience a varied and stimulating range of activities and resources throughout the day. Children's welfare, care and safety are promoted through the staff's experience and practical knowledge of the nursery's policies and procedures. Children's care is further enhanced by the effective staff induction programme which ensures that all staff are supported, have the relevant knowledge and are able to work appropriately in all areas of the setting. There are robust procedures in place for checking that all staff are suitable to work with children and non-vetted staff are not left unattended with the children. Children's records are mostly kept up to date and contain all relevant information. Staff records are detailed and updated through regular supervision meetings and appraisals.

The quality of leadership and management is good. Children benefit from a well-managed setting. The Manager of the nursery acts as a positive role model motivating staff with their very visual presence and enthusiasm for their work. Staff actively respond attending additional training, expressing their ideas and demonstrating their interest for their work. A 'Wow' board enables parents and staff to show their appreciation for each other making all feel valued. Team building activities also encourage a good team spirit which has a positive affect on the children and nursery as a whole. The manager makes effective use of the self-evaluation system producing action plans for change and further improvement. Sessions are well planned, with a balanced range of activities which cover all areas of development. Good planning ensures that resources are well prepared enabling the children to move seamlessly between activities without having to wait. Children's progress is tracked through assessments and parents are kept well informed of this.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to develop children's access to an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity. A good range of activities is in place throughout the nursery including celebration of Chinese New Year and Diwali. A further recommendation has been imposed regarding the younger children's access to resources reflecting positive images.

## **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 good.

## **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):

- improve the recording of observations to further demonstrate children's progression and to assist in planning their further development and challenge
- improve the younger children's understanding of the diverse society in which they live by providing resources reflecting those with disabilities.

### **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 recording of observations to further demonstrate children's progression within the Stepping Stones and to assist in planning their further development and challenge.

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)