

Toddlers Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	223280
Inspection date	05 March 2008
Inspector	Paula Hunt
Setting Address	67 Leicester Road, Groby, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE6 0DQ
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Registered person	Diane Kerr
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Toddlers Nursery School opened in 1995 and operates from a converted three storey detached house in the Groby area of Leicestershire. A maximum of 51 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.45 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 93 children aged from six weeks to under eight years on roll. Of these, 34 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area and attend a variety of sessions. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 17 members of staff. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing a sound understanding of simple good health and hygiene practices. The hand-washing routines ensure children wash their hands after messy play, before meals and after toileting. There are good systems in place for preventing the spread of infection and exclusion policies and procedures for sick children. Accident records are shared with parents and they provide written consent to enable the nursery to seek emergency medical advice or treatment should a serious accident or emergency occur. Most staff have undertaken first aid training and suitable first aid equipment is readily available in each playroom which ensures children are well protected in an emergency.

Children enjoy nutritious, healthy and well-balanced meals, which are freshly prepared by the nursery cook each day. For example, for lunch children have tuna bake and vegetables, and sandwiches with assorted fillings for tea followed by a fairy cake or fresh fruit. Children enjoy snacks of biscuits, fresh and dried fruit together with a choice of water, squash or milk to drink. Children are beginning to learn the importance of eating healthily because staff talk to the children about what they are eating and about foods that are good for them. Menus are displayed for parents to view and include options for children with special dietary requirements such as food intolerances and vegetarian. As a result, children's daily nutritional requirements are appropriately met.

Children develop their physical skills through stimulating daily indoor and outdoor experiences. They are keen to play in the nursery garden, where they develop physical skills as they steer wheeled toys between obstacles and learn how to use their feet to propel themselves forward on the scooters. They have access to a good variety of balancing and climbing equipment. Staff have a good understanding of each child's stage of development which means even the youngest are confident to try out new skills. For example, the children march around the room, move slowly and quickly, hop and jump, balance on a beam and throw and catch balls.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed into the nursery by staff who take an interest in them as they arrive. Displays of children's work are bright and attractive which promotes their belonging and self-esteem. Children are cared for in well-appointed playrooms with bathrooms available on both floors. Nappy changing for the babies takes place in a suitably equipped designated room on the ground floor. Children have access to playrooms which contain a good range of good quality, well-maintained resources which are developmentally appropriate some of which are stored at low-level to encourage independent access. There are good systems in place for checking that toys and equipment are clean and safe.

Children's safety is given high priority at the setting, where effective measures are taken to maintain a secure and welcoming environment. Premises checks are undertaken regularly to maintain the safety and security of the nursery. The entrance door is locked and the premises are monitored by staff who ensure children are collected by identified nominated people. There are clear policies and procedures in place for lost or uncollected children. Babies and toddlers are monitored while they sleep and records of their routines are shared with parents. Good fire precautions are in place and fire drills are practised regularly so that staff and children know

what to do in the event of an emergency evacuation. Children are learning to keep themselves safe as they play. For example, staff tell children sitting near them that they need to sit on their bottoms at the table in case they fall over and hurt themselves. They know that they need to take care when using the staircase to go out to play; they hold the handrail and climb up and down safely. Staff remind them not to leave the creative table with scissors in their hands or to run indoors.

Children's welfare is protected and promoted through current policies and procedures for the safeguarding of children. A designated person is responsible to share information with outside agencies to ensure children are protected at all times. Staff are knowledgeable about child protection and some have attended training to further their understanding. This ensures their good practice is up-to-date and can be shared with all staff. Any concerns are dealt with in a sensitive and appropriate manner. Parents are aware of the setting's responsibility to protect the children in their care and appropriate guidelines are followed at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery, they mostly arrive happy and are keen to join in the activities, through their familiarity with the consistent routines and good relationships with one another and the staff. Babies and toddlers benefit from the provision of a good range of resources and activities, they build strong relationships with the staff and enjoy the range of activities and experiences offered to them. Staff are attentive and responsive to the younger children, talking to them and encouraging them to use their voices. Babies benefit from the interaction of staff, who spend time gently soothing and talking to the children, particularly when babies are preparing to sleep. Toddlers attempt simple puzzles, have regular opportunities for arts and crafts and role play. Play is spontaneous and fun because children are able to develop play ideas for themselves, For example, water is added to the sand and staff use the opportunity to ask the children what it feels like extending their learning by developing their language.

All children benefit from the resources and a wide range of accessible toys and equipment. They have frequent opportunities to enjoy sensory experiences. Babies and toddlers explore sound and texture with toys such as activity centres and natural materials. The staff plan a range of activities for under threes based on the 'Birth to three matters' framework, children are observed and records are kept of their development to ensure that all children develop to their full potential. Children make positive relationships with staff and each other when playing or sitting together at meal times. An effective key worker system ensures they are cared for by consistent staff, whenever possible. Children's individual needs are incorporated into the daily routines well, so they have time for rest, sleep and play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones. They are currently implementing a new planning system which is guided by the interests of the children. The staff also observe children involved in activities and record what they have learnt from their observations. They then use their observations to identify particular interests and areas for development for individual children. Staff use appropriate teaching methods to involve and encourage children. They make use of open ended questions which develop children's thinking skills and encourage them to make decisions for themselves. However, during the lunchtime

period minimum adult:child ratios are not maintained resulting in the deterioration of the children's behaviour which impacts on their learning.

Children's personal and social development is effectively encouraged as they begin to be independent. For example, they pour their own drinks and select their own activities. They know the routine well and interact positively with their peers. Older children are caring towards their younger peers, for example, one child helped a younger child to build a tower. Children are proud of their achievements and confidently approach the visitor to show their paintings. Resources are beginning to be organised to allow for flexibility and spontaneity which enables each child to choose what they want to do and contribute their own ideas. However, the maths and role play areas lack suitable and stimulating resources to fully develop and extend children's learning. Children show interest in written words as they confidently self-select their own names for registration and many can also recognise their friends names. They are encouraged to look at books; some look at books independently and others share books with a member of staff who reads quietly to them. They have opportunities to take part in writing activities on a table with some children attempting to write their names forming recognisable letters.

Children gain confidence in using numbers in their play. They are good at counting and they know the names of simple shapes. Some children are developing an understanding of mathematical concepts such as 'more than' and 'less than' as they group objects. Children are introduced to a range of topics that help to develop their awareness of their environment and the world in which they live. They discuss the weather and the day of the week as they choose the name and symbols for the day and the weather respectively. They learn about the changes in seasons and have some understanding of time when they talk about 'tomorrow and the day after'. They are learning about living things and are able to compare change as they observe seeds and bulbs growing. Through the use of visitors such as the local fire brigade and police the children gain an insight into other people's lives. Children happily talk about themselves and events in their lives and develop a sense of time passing with the clear routines they follow each day. They are interested in technology as they role play with a telephone and use a digital camera to take photographs of their work. They select tools for their own purposes, including glue sticks, and enjoy constructing complex models from recycled materials. Children explore the properties of different materials through activities such as sand play, play dough, split peas and lentils. They benefit from regular access to information technology (IT) activities.

Children are given good opportunities to engage in creative play. They use their imaginations as they dress up as fire fighters, rescue their friends and extinguish house fires. They join in enthusiastically with familiar nursery rhymes and gain confidence as they march, hop and jump to music. All children enjoy physical activity and have good opportunities to reinforce and develop skills using a range of equipment. They run around outside with good spatial awareness and enjoy climbing, crawling and riding wheeled toys, showing developing skill in their movements and balance. Many handle a range of tools and small equipment well, such as, cutlery, scissors and pencils.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the nursery as the good relationship that exist with staff are effective in helping children to settle and be content. Staff show respect for children's different needs and treat children with equal concern. Children have access to a good range of play resources such as books, puzzles and small world figures to raise their awareness of other cultures and diversity. They engage in activities where they learn about other cultures such as

celebrating Diwali and Chinese New Year. Children's behaviour is mostly good because staff are consistently good role models for them. Staff treat each other and the children with respect and give them clear explanations if their behaviour is unacceptable. This helps children to learn to understand right from wrong. Staff frequently use praise and positive language to promote good behaviour. As a result, children are learning to play co-operatively, share and take turns. Children's social skills are developing well because staff are always polite and respectful when they speak to them. They encourage them to have good manners. For example, they praise children when they remember to say 'please' and 'thank you' at snack time. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents are welcome to visit the setting and receive a comprehensive prospectus and welcome paperwork outlining the provision. Daily verbal feedback ensures parents are informed about what their children have been doing whilst attending. Staff actively seek parents' views about their children's needs and interests before the child starts at the setting, and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Regular newsletters in addition to useful information on display in the main entrance area are provided. A formal parents' open evening is held annually to provide them with an insight in to the activities their children are involved in and to inform them of their children's progress and achievements.

Partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. This contributes effectively to children's well-being in the nursery. Parents are provided with a good range of information about the nursery, its policies, procedures and the Foundation Stage curriculum. Their views about their child's needs are sought before the child starts at the setting and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Staff ensure that all parents know how their child is progressing and developing. The setting provide parents with a monthly newsletter detailing activities that can be continued at home or things that can be brought to nursery. This is an effective way to include parents in their child's learning. Parents and children enthusiastically take the 'nursery bear' home at weekends and enjoy writing together in the bear book about the things they have done together. Parents' and carers' comments about the service are very positive. They feel that they have very good relationships with the staff, regular information about what children are doing and achieving and that their children enjoy attending.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children play and learn in a warm, welcoming and well-organised environment. They are grouped according to their ages and level of development in separate playrooms. Staff are committed to providing a welcoming atmosphere where children and their families are well supported. Good recruitment procedures ensure that children are cared for by staff who are suitably qualified and appropriately vetted. Effective induction procedures ensure that staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Staff sit and play with the children, give them comfort when needed, and one to one support. Most documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is maintained to a high standard, however, the register recording children's arrival is not always accurate which potentially compromises their safety in the event of a fire. Records relating directly to children are stored confidentially and in line with requirements.

Leadership and management is good. Both the proprietor and manager are committed to the continuing improvement of nursery education and ensure they spend time in each area of the nursery, so that they can evaluate practice and offer support as necessary. Senior staff meet together regularly for review and planning purposes, while staff at all levels contribute to the

planning of the programme of activities. Regular observations of children help staff to identify children's interests and monitor their progress towards the early learning goals. The setting has established close working relationships with the mentor teacher from the local authority and values the support offered. There is a clear commitment to reflective practice and to ongoing improvement. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

All recommendations have been appropriately addressed and improvements made since the last inspection. The organisation of practice, routines and planning has been reviewed and greatly improved as staff have attended relevant training and successfully incorporated the components of the 'Birth to three matters' framework into their planning ensuring that children are sufficiently challenged. Young children's progress is also regularly monitored and assessed through detailed observations. Good hygiene practice is in place with regard to hand washing as children have access to a bathroom on each level with liquid soap and paper towels provided.

At the last education inspection the nursery was required to evaluate and improve curriculum plans to identify strengths and areas for improvement and to evaluate activity plans to ensure appropriate challenges for all children. It was also required to use children's assessment records to plan the next stage of their learning. All planning is now monitored and evaluated which allows staff to identify strengths in the learning programme and any areas that need further development. This ensures that children have a balanced curriculum and are challenged appropriately. Staff make full use of their observations of the children's progress to inform future planning. Weekly planning takes account of the next steps that individual children need to take and activity plans identify particular children taking part. This ensures that planning takes account of the individual learning needs of the children. Although, the nursery has made good progress in developing the programme for mathematics with opportunities provided in everyday activities access to resources still needs developing. Staff have undertaken several training courses and are fully aware of the Foundation Stage curriculum which enables them to support children's learning in all areas. Parents are provided with a good range of information about the nursery, its policies, procedures and the Foundation Stage curriculum.

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

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

- ensure the register is maintained accurately at all times with regard to each child being recorded as they arrive
- ensure minimum adult:child ratios are maintained at all times (This also applies to nursery education).

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):

- evaluate and improve the organisation and accessibility of equipment and resources to ensure children can be fully independent and play an active role in all areas of learning, in particular relating to role play and mathematical activities.

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