

University Of Nottingham Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	254648
Inspection date	15 February 2008
Inspector	Ann Keen
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Registered person	The University of Nottingham
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?

The University of Nottingham Day Nursery opened in 1995, it operates from a purpose built building on the University of Nottingham campus. It has a range of facilities within the building including playrooms and also has an enclosed outdoor play area. Children access some of the university's sports facilities and the swimming pool. The nursery is open Monday to Friday for 49 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 08.00 until 18.00.

The nursery serves students and university staff. It offers full day care, including funded nursery education for 18 children. There are currently 58 children on roll from four months to five years. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery makes provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

There are 18 staff who work with the children. All staff have an early years qualifications to at least National Vocational Qualification Level 3. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected against infection very well because staff follow good hygiene practices. Children are cared for in clean and attractively presented premises. These are maintained throughout the day by the staff team through regularly checking the toilets, cleaning tables and ensuring the floor is hygienic. Children understand that germs can be 'washed away' and are spread through the mouth or when going to the toilet. Staff keep well-stocked first aid boxes, however, they do not have a system in place to check that the contents are in date so that everything in it is always suitable for use. Children's health is protected well by obtaining permission from parents to administer medicines and staff are careful about giving them to children accurately. Babies' routines and hygiene practices are suitable and staff work very well with parents to ensure that babies are secure and happy during their time at the nursery. They are able to rest and sleep according to their needs in individual bedding which is kept clean.

Kitchens are kept clean and staff adhere to environmental health recommendations relating to food so children are well protected. Children speak knowledgeably about healthy eating and are encouraged by staff to eat nutritious meals and snacks such as raisins, 'Quorn' sausages and vegetable risotto. They are aware of foods that are good for their teeth through specific topics so they can keep their teeth healthy. Staff have excellent regard for children's individual dietary requirements and go to exceptional lengths to ensure children are safe if they have food allergies. Children are offered regular drinks and older children can access bottles of water at any time ensuring they are not dehydrated.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are protected by an effective range of safety precautions throughout the setting. There are safety gates around play areas for the younger children so children are well protected, Socket covers are fitted in unused sockets. Great care has been taken in the organisation of the setting, and staff are vigilant in their supervision. This allows children to develop a very good level of independence in a safe and secure environment. Both indoor and outdoor areas are secure so children are kept safe from unwanted intruders. Children's welfare and well-being is supported by the high level of organisation and the practical design of the building. All rooms are on the ground floor enabling children easy and safe access to a variety of rooms and play areas. Furniture, equipment and toys are appropriate for their purpose contributing towards a stimulating environment. The displays are bright and the rooms light and airy, providing a welcoming environment.

A member of staff takes responsibility for co-ordinating child protection issues within the setting and staff have attended training so they are clear on procedures. A suitable policy is in place so all staff are aware of their responsibilities, as a result children are safeguarded. The setting has good arrangements in place to protect children in case of a fire. Emergency exits are clearly identified and free from obstruction and fire fighting equipment is in place. Children take part in regular practise evacuation drills and a written record is kept.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thrive in the effective child-centred environment. They thoroughly enjoy their time at nursery. Children separating from parents and carers are very well supported to settle and play happily with their friends within a short time. Babies are happy and make very good relationships with staff. Older children engage in charming conversations, talking about their lives and what they are doing. This results in an easy-going atmosphere in which children feel free to express themselves. Children's individual emotional and care needs are very well understood and respected. As a result, they are happy and secure. Rooms are set up with a range of activities when the children arrive. These are very well resourced and are extremely appealing to the children. Toddlers form very positive relationships with the staff and with their peers. In addition to outdoor games using a variety of equipment, current activities include track painting with toy vehicles, gluing and sticking. Toddlers squeal with delight at the thought of seeing a bird in the trees and staff sensitively pick children up so they can see more clearly. Planning for the younger children follows early years guidance very well and staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge of the developmental levels of each child. They skilfully adapt activities to meet their individual needs. The routines and general organisation of the day allows a good deal of interaction between children benefiting them greatly.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Adults working with the children have a thorough understanding of the Foundation Stage and have started to move their planning and thinking towards the new Early Years Foundation Stage. They use very clear and effective systems to monitor individual children's progress and plan for their next steps. Planning for children's individual needs is excellent and parents are particularly well involved so they are working with the staff for the benefit of the children. Children are achieving very well in all areas of learning. They are interested and very well supported by adults so children take part with great enthusiasm. Children's attitudes to their play is positive and productive so they are ready and receptive to learn.

Whilst they are largely free to choose the activities they wish to take part in, they also participate in adult-led sessions. Consequently, children develop their independence and they are helped to move forward in their learning very successfully. However, as the systems for planning and assessment are very new, staff are still developing their approach to make children's learning even better.

The rooms are very well organised to ensure children are able to access a very wide variety of resources and the activities are planned to provide for all the areas of learning. Children help themselves to computer paper to write and draw, they decide if play dough is 'squiggy' and spent time concentrating on building using blocks, for example. Children thrive in this situation and show that they can apply themselves to activities for long periods of time. Staff manage children's behaviour well, praising them and setting clear boundaries and expectations for appropriate conduct. The space is very well organised so children have a broad range of interesting activities. The nursery has the advantage of being able to use some of the universities facilities such as the swimming pool and gymnastics hall so children have excellent opportunities to extend their physical activities. Staff use the nursery's own indoor space effectively to provide for a variety of areas of learning. The outdoor area is large and used well to provide a varied learning environment, allowing children make use of the natural resources such as soil and bark to create their own games and develop their ideas happily.

An extensive range of resources are available to support children's mathematical development so they form a solid basis for their learning. Children count confidently and are becoming very proficient in skills such as matching and sorting. Adults support them extremely well in extending their concepts such as 'full' and 'empty', 'big' and 'small'. Children are developing tremendous vocabularies and benefit from the freedom they experience to express opinions and ask questions. Some are attempting to write their name and they make excellent use of the mark-making areas and many are beginning to form recognisable letters. Children also enjoy looking at books and clearly understand that print carries meaning. Solid foundations are being formed to provide children with appropriate skills for their future learning. Children are very well supported to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They undertake visits and welcome visitors to the nursery such as fire fighters with their fire appliance. They also enjoy opportunities to investigate their local environment. Children benefit from a great many opportunities to plan and design, make models and problem solve. The computer is used effectively by the children to support their learning. Creatively, children are also progressing very well. Many choose to draw their own pictures and produce individual and expressive drawings. They also make very good use of the well equipped role play area. Children play together as they invent spells, for example, and staff use the children's interest in super heroes like Spiderman to create effective play scenarios.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's behaviour is extremely good. They are kind, thoughtful and polite and are developing very good social skills. Children's individual personalities and developmental needs are very thoroughly understood and respected within the setting. This ensures that they are developing very good self-esteem. They are extremely well supported to learn about a wide range of customs and beliefs through topic work including Christmas and Chinese New Year. They have access to a very wide range of resources which promote positive images of people from throughout the community and the wider world. As some of the parents are international students at the university the nursery uses the parents' backgrounds and cultures to support children's learning. Consequently all children benefit from the experiences. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. The staff team have a very positive attitude towards meeting the needs of children with learning difficulty and/or disabilities and support families and children who are experiencing concerns. Excellent working relationships with the parents are used to explore and investigate children's development and work in line with outside agencies. Children's care is enhanced through excellent two-way communication so both the nursery and parents work well for the benefit of the children. The nursery provides daily information so parents are aware of their babies' nappy changes and food intake, for example. Staff welcome parents into the setting and value their opinions and input.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of nursery education funding is outstanding. This is specifically because staff have established extremely effective communication systems to keep parents well informed and involved in their children's learning. They work together for the benefit of the children and staff ask parents to suggest areas that they want them to develop with their children whilst in the nursery and then comment on the progress made. Extensive good quality information is available on entrance boards and in the rooms so parents can see what children are doing during their time in the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The staff work very well together as a team and this creates a very harmonious and positive environment for the children. All staff are vetted to ensure their suitability and are inducted effectively to the practices and procedures of the nursery. Agency staff are introduced into the setting well so they are able to participate and support the children successfully. Good staff deployment and effective adult to child ratios positively contribute to children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to take an active part in the nursery. The organisation of the children's day provides a well balanced and exciting programme of activities designed to challenge and interest them. All required documentation and records are maintained including children's attendance which clearly indicates arrivals and departures. The nursery ensures they ask relevant permission from parents, to administer medication, for example. This ensures excellent support for children's care, health, well-being and play. Overall children's needs are met.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. The nursery operates systems in line with the university and has an outstanding commitment to improving the service provided. Staff identify the strengths and weaknesses of the provision effectively and monitor the practice successfully. The findings are used very well to devise action plans for improvement to benefit the children's education.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the nursery was asked to improve their child protection statement. The required documentation is now in line with current practice ensuring children are safeguarded.

At the last education inspection the nursery was required to evaluate group and structured activities, and to improve monitoring and assessment. The staff have worked hard to ensure that they assess the children extremely well and to provide both group and structured activities which meets the children's needs. They have achieved this and consequently provide children with activities which meet their learning needs very well.

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 an effective system is in place to check that the contents of the first aid boxes are up-to-date.

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):

- continue developing the learning environment to enhance children's control over their own learning.

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