



Early Days Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY216550
Inspection date	08 September 2005
Inspector	Rosemary Linda Tomkins
Setting Address	2a Orme Road, Newcastle, Staffordshire, ST5 2ND
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Registered person	Early Days (Staffs) Limited (4707537)
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets 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?

Early Days Day Nursery has been open since August 2001. It operates from a two storey detached building just outside Newcastle-under-Lyme town centre. A maximum of 54 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 all year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor area.

There are currently 40 children from 6 months to 4 years on roll. Of these, 7 children

receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The nursery supports children with special needs and, also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six full time and four part time staff. All staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. The nursery receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-planned routines. They know, for example, that they have to wash their hands before dinner and wash their hands after using the toilet. Staff follow satisfactory procedures such as, wearing disposable gloves for nappy changing. Regular cleaning of the changing areas sustains good levels of hygiene and helps reduce the risk of cross contamination. Clear procedures for sick and infectious children are displayed to help prevent the spread of infection and keep children healthy.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. Drinks are readily available throughout the session and children know they can ask for a drink. Children under two years are provided with regular drinks according to their needs. Children are given a variety of snacks and enjoy eating a variety of fruit. Children have three meals a day cooked from fresh ingredients by the cook. Menus are displayed and all dietary requirements are discussed with parents. This helps to ensure children remain healthy. However, staff do not follow food hygiene advice when serving pieces of fruit to children which does not encourage children to understand good hygiene practice and exposes the children to germs.

Children enjoy some opportunities for physical exercise. They join in free-play and organised activities inside, such as balancing and climbing on soft play shapes, but children do not play outside on a regular basis which restricts the opportunities to run, jump and benefit from fresh air. Older children walk to the library each week and younger children are occasionally taken on walks. Children are beginning to develop a positive attitude to exercise and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Staff provide a satisfactory range of play experiences for babies and children to age three. All are able to rest and be active according to their needs. Children are comfortable and secure in the quiet rest and sleep areas supported by staff who ensure their daily routines are followed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well-organised environment, where risks to children are limited through appropriate safety and security procedures. Staff monitor access to

the nursery at all times as the entrance door is locked and the outdoor areas are fully secure. The manager ensures there are extra staff for outings to help children stay safe and there are clear written procedures in place. Risk assessments are completed regularly together with daily safety checks for each room.

Children use a range of safe, good quality, developmentally appropriate resources. These are well-presented by staff and children are able to choose from the varied range stored at low level. Staff consistently explain safe practices, such as why they need to stay in a line and hold hands when they are negotiating the stairs. Older children often help younger children to develop their understanding of safety. This helps children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe.

Children are well protected by staff who have attended training and have a clear understanding of child protection issues and follow the correct procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident in the nursery's welcoming and caring environment. They have positive relationships with staff and receive comfort and attention when they need support. Children play happily together using resources such as bricks, books, home corner and moving in time to music, all suitable to their age and stage of development. All children enjoy exploration with paint, water and sand which helps children represent their feelings and ideas in a variety of ways. Younger children show much interest as they reacted to the 'Duck' story repeating words and actions. Children's language and communication skills are promoted well by staff through constant conversation, questions and individual attention. Consequently children speak clearly and are able to express their needs.

There is a good range of resources to promote imaginative play and all children play together in groups in the home-corner acting out activities, such as putting dolls to sleep in the cradles and cooking. As a result children's social skills are developing well.

Good use of observations and assessments for all children help staff to plan for the next steps for play and learning and show how each child is developing new skills. Therefore, children are extending their learning to reach their full potential. Staff evaluate planned activities and adjust to remain flexible and meet individual children's needs.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. However, there is a newly formed staff team and they are still developing their knowledge of the Foundation Stage but are attending training to increase their understanding. Staff plan and provide a varied range of activities under each area of learning, the learning intention is clear and relates to the stepping stones so that all aspects are covered sufficiently.

Staff use suitable methods to maintain children's interest, sitting with children, asking questions and offering support when needed but not always encouraging children's independence. Staff help raise children's awareness of the community and the wider world well and there are a varied range of resources to promote this. Organisation of group time and free play encourage children's learning and help children to concentrate well because they are a small group and often have individual support. Children are appropriately challenged through questioning at story time and during activities, particularly in areas of language and communication development. Behaviour is well-managed and this results in a calm and caring environment for children.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other and staff on arrival. Children are interested and engaged in their play as they select and carry out activities and assume responsibility for personal care. However, children are not encouraged to pour drinks or serve their own food during meal times to further develop their independence and manage their own tasks. Children are friendly and show care and concern for others. They behave well, responding positively to the boundaries set. Children speak clearly and confidently, sharing their experiences and listen intently to stories. They recognise their names and are able to sound letters in their names. Children demonstrate that they know how to form letters, they often practise this or use writing as a way of communicating.

Children understand and use numbers. They count up to five meaningfully and match the number of paint pots to the wall chart. They are developing problem solving skills, comparing numbers and know that one less than three leaves two. Children demonstrate that they understand shape and size as they practise filling containers of various sizes in the sand tray. However, children do not practise counting and comparing during everyday routines. This means that children do not use number names and number language spontaneously.

Children develop an initial sense of time and place through themes and drawings of places local to the nursery. They gain some knowledge of the environment as they are taken on occasional walks to a nature reserve and visit the library every week. However they are not fully developing exploration and investigation skills as they have limited opportunities to investigate the natural world because they do not use the outside area on a daily basis.

Appropriate use of the indoor areas help children develop their physical skills, and children use large apparatus and one-handed tools competently. They play on the soft play shapes and balance along interlinking boards. Children use paintbrushes and scissors with good control. Children are able to express themselves through painting and exploring different textures and are able to name a wide range of colours well. They use their imagination and a range of rhythmic movements as they take part in singing nursery rhymes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy positive relationships with the staff and with each other. They are

valued and respected as individuals and their confidence and self-esteem is developed well by staff with use of praise and encouragement on arrival and during their play throughout the session. Staff ensure that the resources positively represent the children who attend as well as individuals from the wider community. Children visit the local park and surrounding areas to increase their knowledge of the world around them. This helps raise children's awareness of diversity and develop a positive attitude to others. Children behave well, and respond positively to boundaries set by staff. They take turns and share, help each other and remember to say 'please and thank you'. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The nursery's policies and procedures promote inclusion for all children. The entrance to the nursery ensures it is suitable for all to access. Although the setting does not currently care for any children with special needs, senior staff have formulated a system to offer appropriate support.

The partnership with parents is good. All children benefit from the positive partnership staff have developed with parents. This means children settle well because the staff work closely with parents to ensure their child's needs are met. Parents are made aware of how the setting operates through the information booklet. They are informed of topics and operational changes verbally and from the parents' notice board. Children's individual needs are discussed and recorded, daily exchange of information keeps parents informed of their child's well-being. Progress records are accessible to parents in each group room. Partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. They receive detailed information on the educational programme provided for their children and they are encouraged to be involved with their learning by helping them with songs and books.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

There are effective recruitment procedures which ensures staff are appropriately vetted and there is a suitable level of qualified staff who work with the children. Children's records and staff details are stored securely in the office area and available for inspection.

Staff have attended training and are keen to attend further training to increase their understanding of children's development and knowledge of appropriate activities. Staff who work with the children in receipt of funding for nursery education have sufficient knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice to help extend children's learning in all activities and provide appropriate support.

Induction training and appropriate policies and procedures work in practice to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. There are clear systems in place for recording accidents, medication and attendance. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend the nursery.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to conduct a risk assessment on the stairs, identifying actions to be taken to minimize risks, develop and implement an action plan describing how arrangements for sick children will adequately protect others from infection and to ensure that the methods for recording children's attendance are consistent across the nursery and registers are up-to-date at all times.

A revised procedure has been implemented to ensure staff adequately supervise children on the stairs and keep them safe. Children are taught how to keep themselves safe by walking slowly and holding onto the banisters. Two staff members minimise risks by one leading the line of children with the other at the end of the line.

Children who are taken ill are taken to a quiet area and kept calm, with a member of staff. Parents are contacted to collect their child in accordance with the revised procedures. The nursery does not care for sick or infectious children. In this way children are protected from infection.

Staff ensure the registers contain the times of arrival and departure of staff and children. In addition, the registers show which staff care for the children. Registers are completed as children and staff arrive and depart to ensure there is an accurate record of attendance for staff and children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 Ofsted has received one complaint relating to National Standard 7: Health, concerning an alleged accident to a child's head and recording of the accident and National Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents concerning reporting of the accident to the child's parents.

Ofsted investigated the concerns directly with the registered person who was asked to provide a copy of the operational plan and to demonstrate how staff are deployed effectively to minimise the risk of accidents. In addition, Ofsted requested specific details of the incident and any incident forms that were completed. Also, Ofsted asked for a copy of the complaints procedure together with any record relating to the incident. The registered person was also asked to provide a copy of the working in partnership with parents policy to ensure information is shared and concerns are acted upon.

The registered person completed an internal investigation and provided the relevant information as requested. Following a thorough review, an action was set to include the address and telephone number of Ofsted on the written complaints procedure. This action has been addressed. Ofsted is satisfied that the National Standards have been met and can confirm that the registered person remains qualified for registration.

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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 basic hygiene procedures are followed when serving food to children
- ensure all children are provided with regular opportunities for fresh air and outside play

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):

- provide opportunities to ensure children can further develop their personal independence particularly at meal and snack times
- develop and implement a plan which allows children to investigate and explore in the outside area
- develop children's understanding of calculating and counting during every day routines.

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