

Poppys Childrens Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY279713
Inspection date	14 December 2007
Inspector	Susan Smith
Setting Address	Fairfield Hill, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 1NG
Telephone number	01449 614848
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Registered person	Poppy's Children's Day Care Nursery Ltd
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?

Poppy's Children's Day Care Nursery Limited opened in 1995. The present owners took over in April 2004. The nursery operates from one main room in a converted building in the town of Stowmarket in Suffolk. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 07:30 until 18:00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 64 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 33 children receive funding for early education. The nursery serves the village and surrounding local area and children attend for a variety of sessions. The group currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs five members of staff. All of whom, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from the local authority and has obtained the Suffolk Quality assurance scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-organised routines and activities. They know to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet, using facilities that allow them to be independent. Children understand the need to 'wash away the germs' and staff skilfully extend their understanding, for example, explaining that germs can cause upset tummies.

Children receive appropriate care if they are ill or have an accident because staff are aware of children's individual healthcare needs and the required documentation and most of the consents are in place to support this. However, prior written permission from parents is not obtained to seek emergency medical advice or treatment to ensure children receive appropriate care in an emergency. Staff hold current first aid and food hygiene certificates to ensure they are aware of the correct procedures to follow to maintain children's health and prevent the spread of infection, this training is regularly updated and reviewed for all staff.

Children's dietary needs are met through a well-balanced range of nutritious snacks and meals that are prepared daily on the premises and take account of their individual dietary needs and preferences. Children learn the importance of having a healthy diet through discussions with staff. Lunchtime is a social occasion when children sit down together with staff to eat. Children have free access to drinking water throughout the session to ensure they do not become dehydrated.

Children enjoy a range of physical activities both indoors and outside that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They have daily access to the small outdoor area, where they enjoy activities such as ride on toys and practising their ball skills. In addition, older children are given the opportunity to practice getting dressed into their PE kit. This helps them to develop their physical skills and independence in readiness for when they go to school. Children have good opportunities to develop small physical skills whilst using a range of equipment such as scissors, mark-making tools, play dough and small world play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and safe environment where they move about freely and safely around the well-organised room. Their risk of accidental injury is minimised because staff take all the necessary steps to reduce risks to children. For example, staff carry out daily safety checks and the entrance to the provision is kept secure to prevent unauthorised access. Effective systems are in place to ensure children are only allowed to be collected by nominated people. Children and their parents and carers are made to feel welcome in the setting. They are greeted by staff on arrival and have access to displays of useful information about the group.

Staff create a welcoming and stimulating environment. The building is attractively decorated with posters and examples of the children's own artwork. Children freely self-select from an extensive range of safe and suitable toys and equipment that are well-maintained and meet safety standards. This enables children to make many of their own choices, increases their independence and helps them to organise their own play.

Well-implemented policies and procedures are effectively followed to promote children's safety in the setting and when playing outside. Regular emergency evacuations of the premises are practised with the children and staff to ensure everyone concerned knows what to do in the event of a fire. Children are beginning to learn how to keep themselves safe with staff explaining some safe practices. For example, children are gently reminded by staff to walk indoors and to go up the stairs on the slide one by one, so they do not get hurt or hurt others.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted because all staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in protecting children and the relevant documentation is all readily available which ensures correct procedures can be put into place should a concern arise. Robust systems are in place to safeguard children when students and visitors are present. This ensures children are protected from harm or neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Younger children experience a range of activities and play opportunities which overall contributes to their development and learning. Staff have a sound knowledge of child development. The daily routine has a balance of adult-led and child initiated play. Children's independence is encouraged as they are able to move around freely and make independent choices in their play. Children are confident, independent and developing their self-esteem.

The setting uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework with information relating to the framework displayed. Observations are made of children's achievements and the information is transferred to their individual records. A key worker system is in place and staff know the children well. Staff are beginning to introduce the framework into their planning and assessment for children under three.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff use their competent understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn to provide a broad range of activities balanced across the six areas of learning. The planning for focused activities and the everyday routine curriculum does not currently link to stepping stones. In addition, the adult focused activities are not always clearly adapted to take account of children's individual stage of development. Staff are beginning to evaluate the activities against the intended learning outcomes. However, these evaluations are not always used to inform future planning.

Staff effectively use a good variety of teaching methods to help children make progress and adapt their questioning skills to take account of individual children's level of understanding and interest. They are interested in what children say and do and manage children's behaviour well. The sessions are balanced to enable children to experience group times, outside play and to pursue their own interests. Children follow routines which they are familiar with to encourage their participation, for example, when it is time to tidy up children are notified in advance and all become happily involved.

Children relish their time at the setting. They have a good attitude to learning and are happy, well-settled and purposefully engaged throughout the session. Children become confident and self-assured in their play, negotiating and interacting with others to share their ideas and experiences. Children play an active role in their learning offering ideas and responding to challenge with enthusiasm. They are encouraged to socialise throughout the session and children chatter happily with other children and staff. They actively seek friends to play with.

Children have good opportunities to develop their literacy skills. Some children confidently recognise their own name and use their emerging writing skills in a range of play situations. Children listen and respond to stories at circle time, promoting their enjoyment of an increasing range of books. Older children are beginning to sound and name letters of the alphabet.

Children have opportunities to count and use numbers within their play. For example, the staff support the children to count the bricks as they build towers, talking about shape, colour and patterns. Children talk about the numbers on the hopscotch mat while playing together. They use appropriate mathematical language during free-play activities such as comparing who had the largest piece of play dough. Regular opportunities for sand and water play enable children to experiment independently with simple capacity calculations.

Children competently display their skills in using a computer and enjoy operating a balanced range of resources in the home corner to stimulate their interest in everyday technology such as telephones and a microwave oven. Children have opportunities to explore and investigate different malleable materials during everyday play and through planned cooking activities. They enjoy using construction sets and equipment such as scissors and play dough tools to develop their hand to eye coordination.

Children engage in imaginative role play activities based on their own experiences, such as dressing the dolls and playing families. Staff plan a range of role play situations such as a veterinary surgery to extend their ideas. Children explore their creativity through a range of media. However, sometimes staff promote the importance of needing a pre-determined end result. For example, while producing Christmas cards and calendars children could only use pre-cut shapes. Children listen and respond to music and enjoy singing and exploring instruments. Overall, children make good progress in their learning and achieve well given their capability and starting points.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into the setting and are valued by staff who respect their individuality, which helps them develop a sense of belonging. Children are learning to recognise and respect the needs of others. For example, children offer to help each other while completing a puzzle. All children are included and have equal opportunity to access resources and equipment that meet their individual needs, so that they can become confident and independent. Children benefit from the setting's positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) supports staff effectively. She ensures the setting works together with parents and other professionals to meet the needs of all children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They make positive choices and decisions about how they wish to spend their time. For example, choosing to stay indoors rather than go outside with the majority of the children. Their independence is promoted by the well-organised environment and child accessible storage from which they freely self-select resources. Children understand responsible behaviour and remind each other of the rules, for example, 'you have to put on an apron' before taking part in the painting activity. Staff are good role models and use calm and consistent strategies appropriate to children's stage of development and explain why bad behaviour is unacceptable.

Children are sensitive and show concern for their peers, for example, asking 'are you cold?' while playing outside. Regular visitors to the setting such as fire fighters, police officers and belly dancers help the children to learn about their local community and the different jobs people do. Children have access to resources such as posters, books and role play opportunities promoting a positive view of diversity and they take part in different festivals such as Christmas and Chinese New Year.

The partnership with parents and carers is good

Parents are well-informed about the Foundation Stage and their children's progress. The children's individual record of progress is given to the parent every term. In addition, parents are invited to attend an open evening once a year. Parents are very positive about the care provided and complimentary about the caring and sensitive staff and how their children have made such good progress since attending the group.

Most of the required documentation and consents are in place to ensure children are looked after according to their parents' wishes. Staff and parents share information verbally on a daily basis to ensure children's changing needs are met and to provide continuity of care. The views of parents are sought and acted upon via questionnaires. A parents' notice board, regular newsletters and a prospectus ensure that parents are well-informed about the running of the provision.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Operational procedures and policies work in practice to support the successful running of the provision and to promote children's good health, safety, welfare and development. Most of the required documents and consents are in place to ensure staff follow parents' wishes regarding their children's care. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated. Robust recruitment and appointment procedures are in place to ensure children are cared for by staff with a sound knowledge and understanding of child development. A register of children's and staff attendance is maintained on a daily basis, however, it does not record the staff and children's actual hours of arrival and departure.

The well-organised environment and effective staff deployment enhances children's enjoyment, achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. Children's care and learning is enhanced as they are cared for by a committed staff team who work well together. All staff have ongoing opportunities to attend further training. The knowledge that they gain from these courses is used to continue to improve the provision for the children who attend. The nursery have been awarded the Suffolk Quality Assurance Scheme and continue to further improve their good practice.

Leadership and management is good.

The good leadership and management of the nursery education positively contributes to children's progress towards the early learning goals. The nursery manager has a clear vision of providing good nursery education which is shared by staff and the owner with a strong focus on the personal development of all children. The manager sets clear directions leading to improvements in the organisation of nursery education and outcomes for children and is active in identifying future areas for development.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the nursery was asked to ensure hazards in the alley way were made safe. Children are now fully safe as a gate is now in place in the alley which makes all potential hazards inaccessible to them.

At the last nursery education inspection the nursery was asked to provide children with opportunities to participate in self-chosen activities, to select resources freely and to develop a system to record children's progress which encourage parents contributions and are used to inform future planning. Since the last inspection the nursery have fully reviewed the organisation of the session and have moved away from a very structured session to one which allows substantial period of time for children to initiate their own play and chose who they want to play with. They have good opportunities to self-select resources so they can direct their own play. The nursery has implemented a system of recording children's progress which are shared with parents termly. Parents are encouraged to contribute towards these records by adding children's achievements from home. However, the records are not always used effectively to identify the next step in learning and to effectively inform planning. Therefore, this remains a recommendation.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 prior written permission from parent is obtained to seek emergency medical advice or treatment
- ensure children and adults actual times of attendance are recorded.

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):

- ensure planning within the everyday routine curriculum is linked to stepping stones and shows intended learning
- continue to develop adult focused planning to show differentiation and evaluation of intended learning against stepping stones
- further develop the systems to incorporate children's next steps in learning into future planning to ensure provision is based on individual needs and interests.

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