

Smisby Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY280477
Inspection date	25 February 2008
Inspector	Sheila Dawn Flounders
Setting Address	Main Street,, Smisby, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire, LE65 2TY
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Registered person	Smisby Day Nursery Limited
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?

Smisby Day Nursery is one of two settings run by Smisby Day Nursery Limited. It opened in 1990 and has been under the current ownership since 2004. It operates from three rooms in an old school building, which is situated in the village of Smisby, close to Ashby-de-la-Zouch in Leicestershire. A maximum of 50 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 secure enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 73 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Of these, 28 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area, as most of their parents live locally or travel in to work in the area.

The nursery employs 18 members of staff to work with the children. Of these, 16 hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

All of the children are encouraged towards an understanding of a healthy lifestyle because they are provided with freshly prepared nutritious meals, have good access to physical play and daily opportunities for fresh air. Children are provided with all their meals and snacks by the nursery with most of the babies' bottles also made up as required, rather than being stored ready prepared. A varied menu is provided taking into account seasonal availability of fresh foods and the dietary requirements of the children. Information from parents about health and dietary needs is updated at least annually. Babies have their meals in accordance with their own routines and sometimes a different meal is prepared to suit their needs. Discussion takes place with parents before any new foods are introduced or the balance of liquids to solids changed. As children move through to the toddler room they are encouraged to be more independent, with most easily able to feed themselves, although staff remain on hand to provide support if needed and ensure the food is of a suitable temperature before the children sit at the table. The pre-school children are very independent, with a helper setting the table and all the children serving their own food and drinks. Throughout the nursery children are well hydrated with water always available to the children.

All of the children have access to physical activities daily, usually out in the fresh air for the toddler and pre-school children. Within the baby room staff ensure that there is always a piece of large apparatus in use to encourage the mobile children to develop their skills, for example, by crawling through the tunnel and they also plan specific activities to develop individual children's emergent sitting, standing and walking skills. Babies are often taken out in the garden or for local walks, whilst maintaining their sleep and feeding routines. Older children use the outside area for periods daily and in the summer spend extended periods out there as many 'classroom' activities are taken outside. Here they are able to access a range of toys, for example, wheeled toys, climbing frames and playhouses as well as a large grassed area which includes a sunken boat, which all help to develop their large muscles. The older children demonstrate control of their movements, for example, to balance, jump and throw items when using equipment set out as an obstacle course.

Children stay healthy because they are cared for in premises that are warm and clean, they are protected from cross-infection because the setting has a very clear sickness policy and the admission form reinforces that children cannot attend when ill. Children receive good care in the event of an accident or if taken ill because staff have current first-aid qualifications, all are trained to use an Epi pen and several first-aid boxes are maintained. Detailed accident and medication records are kept and signed by parents with confidentiality maintained when completing these records. Staff use a timer to remind them when a child's next dose of medication is due to ensure it cannot get forgotten. Children are protected from hazards associated with food preparation and serving as many staff have trained in food hygiene; the food for younger children is ready plated in the kitchen and hand washing is part of the routine for children before eating. Pre-school children are able to manage their own toileting needs, although staff do monitor their hand washing at times, whilst those who use the toilet from the toddler room are fully supervised. Generally procedures for hand

washing are in place for younger children and promote their well-being. A robust nappy changing procedure ensures the mat is cleaned before use, staff wear gloves and each child uses their own supplies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have access to premises which are safe, secure and fit for their purpose. Each age group has their own separate base room, with appropriate safety measures in place, for example, safety gates are fitted across the entrance to the baby and toddler rooms and also to the fire exit from the toddler room, but this is not necessary in the pre-school areas. Some protection is consistent throughout the building, for example all radiators and pipes are guarded. Each base provides its children with sufficient space to ensure a variety of activities and necessary facilities for their care are provided, for example, the sleep room for the babies is within their area, toddlers use sleep mats in part of their room and all of the children eat in their own areas. The whole premises is very welcoming to the children and their families, with bright visual displays throughout. The outdoor play space is mainly at the rear of the building, so that children are protected from the car park, and divided into areas for separate use by the differing age groups at times. It is fully enclosed and the older children particularly have a large space to use which contains hard surfaces and grass so that a variety of activities are undertaken in all weathers, with ample shade provided in the summer months. Children are well supervised outside with ratios maintained at all times, with staff particularly monitoring access to the gates. However, the drains are not covered and in such a large area where children and staff are often spread out this could compromise their safety.

All the furniture, equipment and toys provided for the children are appropriate for their purpose and conform to safety standards. Staff are very aware of ensuring they consider the risk from any damage to items or if using things with a different age group and, as a result, they are maintained in good condition. Staff conduct frequent risk assessments to ensure that as much as is practicable precautions are in place to prevent accidents, for example, babies are always strapped in to chairs and children kept in another area of the toddler room when the tray of hot dinners is brought in. As a result accidents are usually minor in nature, but all the records are reviewed to ensure there is no common cause or actions that could be altered in future. Reminders are given to children, for example, not to climb on the table, to help them learn to keep themselves safe. They also take part in regular practises of the emergency evacuation drill, which is done often enough to ensure all mobile children and staff are familiar with it, visitors are also required to read the information on arrival so that they are made aware of their role. The older children are based near the main entrance but the use of an outer lobby and very secure arrival and departure procedures, including parents notifying the nursery if someone else is collecting their child, ensures that they are not at risk at these times. Children are kept safe on outings, for example, on the morning school run staff use company vehicles, follow the procedures and take all contact details and equipment that they may need, such as a mobile phone and first-aid kit. Children are also protected because the registered person has ensured that staff are all familiar with the settings' safeguarding children policy and know what procedures to put in place if they have any concerns. Parents have full access to these procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children develop confidence and self-esteem as they are encouraged towards increasing independence in accordance with their stage of development, for example, non-mobile babies are provided with resources to help them sit, with toys around them to entice them to reach out and pick them up. Staff interact well with them, such as helping to build up the bricks so the babies take delight in knocking them over again. In the toddler room children respond

positively to rhymes and enjoy joining in with actions or choosing what song to have next. The school-aged children attend before school and are free to select what activities they want to use from the range available in the pre-school areas. Young children are interested in what they do because they have access to a wide range of activities which staff plan using the 'Birth to three matters' framework, providing balance between the basic structure of the day, rotation of toys in some areas and individual focussed activities. In the toddler room, for example, the construction toys are rotated over the week to ensure that children have a varied experience, whilst in the baby room there are different musical toys each session.

Young children become skilful communicators as they talk and gesture to staff constantly in the toddler room, for example, about what the pieces of an inset puzzle are, including using arm movements to reinforce the fact that one piece is a train. Babies have their emergent language responded to appropriately and staff also talk about what they are doing all the time, including during care routines such as nappy changing, so that even the youngest are immersed in language. Children acquire new knowledge and skills as they discover the environment around them, particularly in outdoor play or as the babies learn new physical skills inside. The toddlers develop their control as they paint, use glue sticks, sponges, stencils or add their contribution to the drawing table and their imaginations as they access a range of small world resources giving them opportunities to model their experiences of the world.

Children's progress and development is well supported because staff observe and record their achievements regularly using a common system throughout the nursery, linked to aspects of the framework which make it possible for staff to see what each child's next steps need to be. Staff then use some of this information to lead into individual focussed activities for their key group which provide challenge for the child, for example, to develop their involvement in painting. As children follow their own interests for most of the day they have many opportunities to use their initiative, for example, when outside doing an obstacle course children decide to put some resources into a wheelbarrow and take that along the balance beam with them.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Funded children benefit because staff working with them have a variety of qualifications and experience, with all having sound knowledge of the curriculum and a understanding of how children learn. Children are provided with an interesting range of planned activities that cover all aspects of the six areas of learning and relate to the appropriate level within the stepping stones and all staff participate in the planning process. Each session includes some planned activities, but largely centres around the children's own choices alongside continuous provision activities. The focussed activities that staff plan contain most elements needed to make them effective, although staff do not always use all aspects of their documentation. Differentiation is often not considered at the planning stage in these activities and as a result it is left to the varying skill of the staff, although it is planned for at talk time when the group divides. Staff evaluate the planning, although this process is often descriptive and does not consider whether the learning intentions have been achieved or may need to be revisited.

Children progress well because staff interact with them and make good use of questioning and spontaneous learning opportunities. They use a variety of teaching methods, including modelling how to play a game and open and closed questioning to make the children think. They listen to what the children say demonstrating that they take a real interest in what the children are talking about and allow them time to think for themselves. Staff are skilled at knowing when to intervene, for example, distracting boys when they begin to play fight to a more constructive

computer activity; or when not to, for example, allowing children free reign to move cushions around to make their own den. They know the children well and get information about their ability as they begin this phase either from the toddler room records or through discussions with parents and their own observations for children new to the nursery. Frequent observations are added to each child's records, showing clear progress from their starting points, although staff do not always follow this through by identifying the next step needed and then linking those to the future planning.

The funded children learn through activities that cross the curriculum using planned topics which staff base around the children's interest. During the current topic of transport they colour in their own choice of transport pictures and are encouraged by staff to attempt writing their own names, which some children are able to do with recognisable letters. Several children experiment with the construction forming the base of a transport activity until they are able to fix it back together again, discussing and negotiating over who will do it. They play a co-operative game, taking turns or use their imagination to make a den with cushions and scarves, a variation from tents they had made with the staff a few weeks ago also showing them building on their own learning. They have access to creative activities constantly, using a wide variety of tools and materials, currently using the salt dough to make pancakes, then making a cherry to go on the top showing initiative by using a tea cup as a mould.

The children are obviously happy to be at nursery and are keen to play and learn; they welcome each other on arrival, are responsible for taking their coats off and confident as they move about the premises. They demonstrate interest in the written word when looking at books, showing curiosity about their name cards or using magnetic letters and are also encouraged to listen carefully to sounds, for example, by playing sound lotto. Children use numbers during activities, for example, talking about 999 in connection with an ambulance, or looking at the numeral involved in the date. They concentrate on a different number, shape and colour each week to reinforce their knowledge and use mathematical ideas in many activities, for example, weight and measurement when making pancakes or shape when making Valentine biscuits. Children are all confident about using the computer, with several children usually wanting to do so at once, with programmes that link into other activities, for example, they demonstrate good control of the mouse to click on the porridge bowls of the three bears as they listen to the story. Then later they have to use their knowledge of number to join the dots and see what object appears. Children often engage in imaginative play, practising the language they hear as they re-enact experiences from their own lives and model the use of realistic equipment, with links provided to the current theme.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have their individual needs met well, including any additional needs. Staff ensure that they establish and then maintain a close relationship with parents so that all changes are discussed as they arise, for example, about how the child has slept overnight so that they know when their first sleep is likely to be due. Further discussions take place regularly to update routines and always before children move through to the next room. Staff are vigilant about ensuring that any messages are passed onto the key worker if they were not present when the child arrived. There are effective procedures in place for the identification and support of children with learning difficulties and or disabilities. All children develop their individuality and self-esteem as they are given choices over activities, have opportunities for self-selection and get respect for their ideas and opinions from the staff and other children. New children are helped to settle quickly and soon have a sense of belonging as they become familiar with the

organisation of the day in their base room, know where their own belongings are and see their parents or carers made welcome when they arrive. At times children see those from other rooms as they move around the building or play out at the same time, usually doing different activities, thus helping them become aware that others have differing needs. All of the children have access to a range of resources that provide them with positive images of the wider community, with the pre-school children particularly engaging in a variety of activities to help them learn about aspects of other cultures and religions. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children's positive behaviour is promoted as a result of staff's implementation of effective strategies such as encouraging them to have good manners, be polite, share and interact well with their peers. Older children are expected to have respect for adults, other children and the resources but simple reminders are given if necessary, with explanations as to why the behaviour is unacceptable and a short period away from the activity. Distraction and redirection are used with the younger children with staff consistently using praise when they do something well so that they learn to understand what reasonable behaviour is. All children throughout the setting are encouraged to report any bullying with methods in place to deal with this sensitively. Parents of the youngest children have daily sheets which provide them with information about their child's care routines and in 'toddlers' they access this from a central chart. All parents discuss the activities that children have been involved in as they collect them and also take home many of their pieces of creative work. They are able to access all the nursery policies and procedures either in printed copies or via the website and staff ensure that their consents and contact information is updated annually.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funded early education is good. They have access to information about the setting and its educational provision through their visits, the documentation provided, the displays and discussions with staff. They are made aware of where the planning is displayed and encouraged to look at it so that they are aware of the current topic and associated activities taking place. Regular parents evenings reinforce the discussions that take place to keep parents updated on their children's achievements and recent progress. They have many opportunities to share what they know about their child which staff take note of and also monitor to see if concerns raised are resolved. They feel involved in their child's learning because they are advised of future topics in advance, given suggestions as to how they might continue these at home and told what stories will be used. They are also able to share their home experiences with the group when 'Jasmine the Giraffe' comes to stay with their child.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because all staff have undergone suitability checks. The registered body is aware of their responsibilities regarding the employment of staff and has robust recruitment procedures in place and all staff are made aware if a new member of staff's checks are not completed. New staff receive comprehensive induction that includes all policies and procedures on the first day. The staff working with the children are mostly very well qualified and continue to attend a wide variety of relevant training. Children receive good care because a key person system is used effectively, overall ratios are met at all times and staff are suitably deployed, for example, they sometimes move to another room to cover, but not unless their own rooms ratios are correct. There are effective arrangements in respect of planned and unplanned staff absences, with the officer in charge able to provide cover or part-time staff work extra hours if surplus staff are not available from within other rooms.

All necessary documentation is available on site, with all required policies and procedures in place and reviewed regularly, plus several additional ones. When any changes are required, they are made quickly and at the same time the new version is made available to parents. Staff are kept updated by looking at a different policy each month and are told in advance when new procedures are brought in. Daily records such as registers are kept up to date, accurately maintained and appropriately archived when no longer current.

In all the base rooms staff organise the resources and their time well, working very much as a team. They all ensure that times when children have to wait are kept to a minimum, for example, toddler room staff read a story whilst lunches cool down before children go to the table and children's coats are put on ready for outdoor play a few at a time as they are singing rhymes. When taking young children to change their nappies all necessary supplies are kept within reach of the changing station, with staff mindful about checking the bag for a new starter before they go through. They always ensure that the other staff know they are leaving the room. Staff always take time to talk to parents, but do so within their base rooms so that they are still able to help supervise the other children, unless the conversation is confidential. Senior staff are also given time away from the care of the children to keep their paperwork updated. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the funded children is good. The officer in charge takes responsibility for this with the joint room supervisors and they all work closely together. During regular room meetings they discuss all aspects of the funded provision, with the officer in charge supporting them through her own experience of working in the pre-school. They identify their training needs through these discussions and their annual appraisal process and seek support from external sources, if needed, to further develop their practise and the experiences provided for the children. The officer in charge is able to monitor and evaluate the funded provision through her ongoing contact with the staff and children, she also looks at the planning and children's records to ensure they are all progressing well and in accordance with what she knows their abilities to be. They demonstrate a strong commitment to improve through continuing access to training; the support provided to make a child-centred environment, which encourages increasing independence, and an ample supply of resources alongside sufficient staff to work directly with the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to improve medication records. There is now a procedure in place to obtain permission for administering long-term medication, which differs from that for other medication, with records maintained and stored in accordance with required standards.

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):

- make sure children are unable to access the drains in the outdoor play area.

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 that the evaluation of activities links into the declared learning intentions, considering if the children have achieved them
- extend the planning in focussed activities to ensure that differentiation is always included, to cover the ability range present.

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