

Stanhope Day Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY284247
Inspection date	15 November 2007
Inspector	Judith Chinnery
Setting Address	114 Regent Road, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE1 7LT
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Registered person	Philippa Lambden
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?

Stanhope House Day Nursery is situated in Regent Road in Leicester, close to the University and city centre. It is privately owned and affiliated to the University of Leicester. The nursery operates from a converted Victorian building set in its own grounds. Most families attending the nursery are associated with the university.

There are currently 42 children on roll. This includes 13 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children who have disabilities or learning difficulties and 10 children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting is open 08:15 to 17:45 from Monday to Friday for 50 weeks of the year.

10 staff work with the children, most of whom have early years qualifications. The nursery holds an Investors in People award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted well in this setting. Children receive healthy, freshly prepared meals each day, which are well planned to meet children's dietary needs. Children and parents benefit from being able to choose from a meat or vegetarian option each day. Menu choices include a good range of fresh fruit and vegetables. Children are also encouraged to drink plenty of water so that they remain hydrated. Regular opportunities for children to taste different foods and cook enables children to learn about good health and healthy lifestyles.

Children enjoy being active in this setting. They are able to make use of the large garden on a daily basis and get plenty of fresh air. Children are developing good large body skills because staff offer children a range of physical activities both inside and outdoors. Young babies enjoy making use of the space in their room to crawl, pull themselves up and practise their walking skills. Older children are adept at running, jumping, balancing and climbing.

The setting and all the areas used by the children are kept very clean. The staff observe well established routines for nappy changing such as using gloves and aprons. This means that young children are less likely to be exposed to cross-infection. The younger children are also supported effectively by staff in washing their hands regularly and learning about why they need to do this, while older children manage their personal hygiene well with little help. This is because staff have established good routines and habits with the children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety and protection are given a priority in this setting. Staff ensure that the building is welcoming to children and parents with attractive displays. It is well maintained with safety precautions such as stair gates and socket covers in place. This means that children can move around the setting safely. Staff use up-to-date risk assessments effectively to help them manage children's safety such as when playing outside. This means that children are not exposed to unnecessary hazards.

Children are able to sit, play and eat safely because the furniture such as table and chairs are appropriate for their age and stage of their development. The wide range of resources are also well chosen with children's safety in mind. Children are developing a good awareness of their own safety. This is because staff are vigilant about their safety and offer gentle reminder about how to use things such as the stairs safely. However, while most children play safely in each room, older children's safety may be compromised because they can access very hot radiators.

Children are well protected and safeguarded because staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures. The staff recognise signs of abuse such as unexplained injuries and changes to children's behaviour. There are good systems in place for staff to record and report their concerns. Managers also have a good understanding and are supported by effective policies and procedures for managing any potential concerns and allegations against staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children really enjoy being in this setting. They are making good progress and their play and learning. Staff get to know the children well and build good relationships with them. This means that children settle well and are keen to become involved in activities.

Young babies are starting to develop their communication skills because staff talk to them and respond to their sounds and babblings which they make. They really enjoy exploring resources such as the musical instruments and finding out what noises they make. They are delighted when they make the cause and effect toys work such as pressing the button to make the figure pop up.

The toddlers continue to make good progress in their play. They are developing a real love for books and stories because the staff read to them a lot. The children enjoy pointing to the pictures and starting to name familiar objects. Children love to explore and experiment because the staff offer a range of activities which enable them to make choices for themselves. For example, children spend time exploring the sand filling and emptying containers to see what it will do. They explore the paint and experiment with different objects to see which ones print. They are also developing good hand-eye co-ordination because the staff encourage them to join in with activities such as making collage. Children sit for some time carefully sticking small papers and sequins to create their own pictures.

The staff are developing a good knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They use this to inform their assessments of children's progress and for planning a wide range of stimulating and worthwhile activities. This means that children experience good opportunities to explore and investigate. However, staff are less proactive in using the information from assessments to inform their plans so that activities are not always based on what children are interested in and need to do next. This means that more able children may be less likely to develop to their full potential.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning for nursery education is good. Children arrive and greet each other and staff warmly and are eager to become involved in activities. They are developing good concentration skills and stay for some time at various activities such as making drawings of a dinosaur or using the cash tills, pretending to be in a shop. Children form good friendships with each other and need little support in sharing and turn taking. This is because the staff support the children well and offer praise and encouragement as well as talking about their expectations for behaviour during circle time.

The staff have a broad knowledge of the Foundation Stage and its stepping stones which they use effectively to plan and provide a wide range of activities. This supports children's learning across all six areas and ensures that they make good progress towards the early learning goals. The staff record observations, chart children's progress and are beginning to identify what some children may need help with. While plans are detailed and include learning intentions for some activities, staff do not always make effective links with their assessments of children's progress. This means that activities are not always based on what children are interested in or need to do next. As a result more able children are not sufficiently challenged to make as much progress as they might.

The staff are developing effective methods which support children's learning. They listen to children and give time for them to respond as well as asking open-ended questions which help them to develop their thinking skills. Consequently children are talkative and like to try out new words such as in a conversation about the doctors and injections. Children make good use of the book corner. They are developing a love for books and frequently choose to sit looking at books and using the pictures to retell stories to their friends. Children are also keen to draw and make marks using lines and circles. Most children can talk about and recognise that this represents something, while many older children can draw recognisable images and write some letters such as those of their own name. The labels and symbols used throughout the room and during activities also effectively support children's language development, particularly those children who speak English as an additional language or have a disability or learning difficulty.

Children count well by rote and are starting to recognise some numerals because the staff provide opportunities to use numbers in play such as talking about the numbers on the cash till and calculator. Many of the children are starting to develop some skills in solving simple mathematical problems such as deciding whether they have enough or too much during a cooking activity. Children also use size language in their play such as 'he has a very big head he does' with reference to a dinosaur being drawn.

Staff are also developing opportunities for children to explore and investigate things for themselves so that they can expand their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children explore how things change through regular cooking activities such as making cheese straws where they talk about the ingredient and what will happen as they are mixed together. Children are also developing their understanding of the natural world through collecting items such as leaves and conkers and other autumnal material. Children and staff celebrate a variety of relevant festivals throughout the year and enjoy finding out about differences in other cultures and beliefs. Children participate in a number of activities which promote their physical development well. They ably move around the setting and can climb and run with agility. They are developing their fine hand skills as they practise using cutlery at meal times as well as manipulating dough and using scissors.

As staff move away from directing activities themselves the children are developing their own creative skills. They like to experiment with different media such as glue and paint to create their own collages and art work. They use their imaginations to take on different roles in the home corner or when playing with small world figures. Children know a growing repertoire of songs and love to sing to themselves.

The setting is well resourced and has a good range of toys and equipment to support children in all six areas of learning. Staff work directly with the children and are developing their skills in facilitating children's exploration and play. However, the setting's current policy of moving staff around regularly means that staff are unable to develop an expertise in the Foundation Stage. This contributes to the weaknesses already identified in planning and children's ability to make progress to their full potential.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Each child in this setting is recognised as individual. Children form warm and close relationships with staff which help them to settle quickly and feel secure. Staff value the cultural and linguistic diversity of the families using the nursery. Children's individual needs are met because staff obtain relevant information from parents about their likes and dislikes as well as their health

and dietary needs. Staff make effective use of children's home languages as well as pictures and symbols to sensitively support children in learning English. Children also experience different foods from around the world as well as resources which reflect positive images of different cultures. Children are developing a respect for themselves and each other through this and the celebration of a variety of festivals such as Hanukkah and Thanksgiving. Staff are knowledgeable about supporting children with disabilities and learning difficulties. They have good systems in place and work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure that all children are included fully in the life of the setting. Activities are adapted effectively to ensure that all children are able to access them.

Children behave really well in the setting. The staff effectively manage children's behaviour across all ages. They are patient and offer praise and encouragement to all children. They divert and distract younger children skilfully and then to share and take turns. Older children are well aware of expectations and boundaries since they talk about behaviour during circle time and make good use of the picture cue cards to remind them about acceptable behaviour.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. This is seen in children's knowledge and understanding of the world, their good behaviour and developing respect for themselves and each other.

Staff develop close relationships with parents. They are good at keeping parents informed about their children's day and progress through daily discussions and newsletters. Opportunities for parents to share what they know about their child and to make choices mean that children are cared for in a way that meets the needs and wishes of children and parents. Partnership with parents for nursery education is good. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress as staff share development records with them. They also have opportunities to contribute what they know about their child to this process. Parents are becoming increasingly involved in their children's learning because activity ideas are shared in newsletters as well as by staff as they discuss children's development. However, while parents receive a lot of information about their child, they are less well informed about the Foundation Stage and the educational curriculum provided by the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The effective organisation of the setting promotes good outcomes for children. The needs of the children for whom the setting provides are met.

The setting is staffed by a long serving staff team who work well together. They are led well by an enthusiastic owner and manager. The nursery has clear aims to promote the well-being of all children and is committed to continuous improvement. Recruitment systems are robust. They ensure that children are well protected and cared for by staff who are suitable and qualified. The setting promotes access to training and all staff take up courses such as in 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundations Stage to keep their skills up-to-date.

Managers ensure that there are always enough staff placed throughout the nursery. This means that children enjoy attention both in small groups and on a one to one basis. Staff are well known to the children and share close relationships with them which promotes their care, learning and play effectively. Comprehensive policies and procedures are available to the staff and parents. They underpin practice across the nursery and are well known by the staff because the manager reviews and shares them during staff meetings. Policies are regularly up-dated

and promote children's ability to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve and make a positive contribution well.

Leadership and Management for nursery education is good. The owner and manager have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They work well together and compliment each others skills and specialisms in working with children. The manager works along side staff and effectively models good practice so that staff continually learn about and develop their own skills.

The owner and manager have good systems in place such as appraisals for identifying individual strengths and training needs. They are also well aware of the strengths and weaknesses in their provision of nursery education and are able to draw up effective development plans to address most issues for themselves. They make effective use of their own observations and children's development records to monitor and evaluate their educational provision.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection in August 2004 the setting was asked to improve complaint procedures under care and to improve target setting for children's progress under Nursery Education. Since then the setting has revised its complaints procedures and has ensured that this in line with current guidance and includes information for parents in how to contact the regulator. This ensures that the care of children is transparent to all. The setting has also continued to improve nursery education for all children and now identifies what most children need to do next. They are beginning to make some links with planning but this is not yet fully realised and continues to have some impact on more able children's ability to make progress to their full potential.

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 any 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

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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):

- ensure that hazards to children are minimised, in particular, children's access to hot radiators

- further improve the links between assessment and plans so that what children are interested in and need to do next is clearly reflected in the activities offered to ensure that more able children are sufficiently challenged (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):

- make more effective use of time and resources including accommodation to support children's learning across all six areas of the Foundation Stage
- ensure that parents receive information about the Foundation Stage Curriculum.

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