

Puffins Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	103158
Inspection date	23 January 2008
Inspector	Heather Tanswell
Setting Address	Water-Ma-Trout Industrial Estate, Helston, Cornwall, TR13 0LW
Telephone number	01326 565349
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Registered person	Caroline Anne Carter
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?

Puffins Day Nursery opened in 1991. This privately owned nursery operates from a converted industrial unit on the outskirts of Helston, in Cornwall. The Dolphin Out of School Club, owned and operated by the nursery, also runs from the premises, with a separate base room and facilities. A maximum of 76 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday, all year round. Opening times are from 08:00 until 18:00 with nursery education sessions operating from 09:00 until 11:30 during term times only. All children share access to any of three enclosed play areas.

There are currently 80 children from birth to 10 years on roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from surrounding towns and villages. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs 15 staff. All staff member have early years or play work qualifications to NVQ Level 2 or 3. In addition, one member of staff is currently working towards an additional qualification. The setting receives support from an advisory teacher from the Local Authority Family Services, and the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for on clean and tidy premises where staff take pride in the setting's appearance. Staff clean the premises and resources routinely and thoroughly, taking care also to wash and clear up as they go. Staff working with babies and younger children use disposable gloves when they change nappies and wipe the mat and potty clean between uses to minimise the risk of cross infection. However, outdoor shoes are worn in areas where babies play on the floor and learn to crawl. Older children are accompanied from their base room to the toilet area, and once they are able, they wash and dry their hands thoroughly using soap, water and individual disposable towels. Staff do not always remember to implement the established good hygiene routines that require them and children to wash their hands before handling food and eating, which poses a risk of cross infection. All staff recently updated their training in first aid for infants and young children, which ensures children, receive appropriate care when minor accidents occur.

Children enjoy taking part in a wide range of activities that contribute to their good health and physical development. They benefit from daily exercise out in the fresh air or indoors in wet weather. Children run, climb, ride, jump onto a rope swing and kick balls in the spacious rumpus room. Pre-school and after-school-children go on regular walks and visits to local parks to develop their strength and stamina. Children have ready access to fresh drinking water at all times as staff make sure water bottles are always available. At snack times, milk is provided as a healthy option to keep children properly fed and hydrated.

Children thrive on the healthy snacks and cooked meals provided for them in quantities that are sufficient for their growing needs. Lunches cooked on the premises using fresh ingredients such a chicken, carrots, peas and broccoli, and milk-based puddings provide children with nutritious, tasty meals that suit their developing palate. Children's special dietary needs are fully known, respected and catered for appropriately whenever possible. For example, meals are mashed or liquidised as part of children's individual weaning programme. Snacks such as fresh and dried fruits, yoghurt and vegetable sticks make sure children learn to eat healthily options only between meals.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children receive a friendly welcome when they enter the colourfully decorated setting. Staff monitor access to the premises and check visitor's identity routinely. Children play independently and safely with considerate levels of supervision appropriate for their age. A part of the outside of the building requires some maintenance work to make sure the area is safe for children's play. A gate between a play area and the car park is not secure. A log records the regular checks on fire safety equipment and the details of emergency evacuation practises. However, these practises have not been conducted sufficiently often and with regard for the patterns of attendance of staff and children to ensure everyone knows what to do to keep themselves safe if a fire breaks out. Each room has its own risk assessment that key staff follow each day to ensure areas are safe to use. Additional risk assessments and safety measures keep children safe on outings.

Children gain access and make ready use of the good quality equipment that staff check routinely as part of their daily routines. Space is set aside for rest and relaxation on comfortable seats and cushions in quieter areas for older children. Younger children rest undisturbed in a specially equipped room leading off the baby room and staff check them carefully every few minutes as they sleep to ensure they stay well. Children are protected from harm by staff who have a good understanding of child protection policies and procedures. Staff are clear about their personal responsibility and role in promoting children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children of all ages are very happy and settled at the nursery. This is largely due to the effective implementation of the key worker system that ensures children develop close and trusting relationships with their main carers. Children up to three, cared for in three separate base rooms most of the time, come together to socialise in the afternoon supported by their key workers and also for large group activities in the rumpus room. This ensures children become familiar with other children, carers and spaces easing the transitions between the baby room, 'Shrimps', 'Tiddlers' and 'Starfish', and move about freely in large open spaces as they develop their physical skills.

Children of all ages experience a wide range of interesting planned and seasonal activities that contribute to their overall development and learning. Babies enjoy crawling through tunnels and babbling away to staff who respond with delight in reply to their early attempts at conversation. Toddlers enjoy reaching for, catching, blowing and popping bubbles with their hands and feet. Children learn about the natural environment and numbers as they go on outings to collect leaves, which they then use to make pictures and resources such as number lines. They learn about two-dimensional forms and refine their hand to eye co-ordination as they practise throwing beanbags and balls into shapes marked on the floor. Practitioners, by introducing the range of activities on offer to children before play begins, inspire them to take part at their chosen activity with great enthusiasm.

Older children go on outings to support a topic and to help them learn about the natural world they live in. For example, as part of a theme on toys, pre-school children visit the local museum that has a display of toys from years gone by. Older children also go on outings to local farms, beaches, on woodland walks and to the skateboarding park. In the out of school club, children have access to additional age appropriate resources such as computer games, table football, video and board games and a range of creative resources.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are eager to learn and growing in confidence. Experienced practitioners, who understand the importance of balancing adult led and child-initiated activities to inspire purposeful play using a wide range of interesting, accessible resources, enhance children's learning and development. Practitioners value children and make good use of questions to help them think more deeply about what they are doing, and to move them on in their language skills, thinking and understanding. They make good use of information from home and their observations of children's achievements in the setting to inform planning and set realistic challenges based on each child's starting points. Some large group activities are not well enough organised or thought through in advance to influence learning and ensure children remain well occupied and interested.

Children learn to recognise similarities and discrepancies as they play matching and find the difference games. They can identify their own pictorial name card and self-register showing they know the daily routines well. Children enjoy listening and joining in with familiar stories. They handle books properly, turning pages carefully, starting at the front and working their way to the end of the story as they talk about the illustrated characters and events. Children begin to predict and calculate how many, as they use numbers to count aloud led by staff in playful rhyming games such as 'Five Speckled Frogs'. However, staff rarely make use of labels such as number lines, name cards or letter shapes in planned or self-initiated play to help children begin to recognise and represent numerals, letters, sounds and words of personal significance to them.

Children have good opportunities to design and construct models, using a range of building kits such as wooden blocks and Duplo. Children develop their understanding of technology as they use computers and a toy microwave. They enjoy singing and accompanying familiar songs with instruments as they take part in specially planned music sessions. Children learn about rhythm, and use musical terms such as 'forte' and 'piano' correctly to describe the music they make. Children engage in imaginative role-play such as pretending to be shopkeepers and police officers, ably supported by practitioners. Children develop their creativity through many art and craft activities, the results of which practitioners display about the nursery to make the environment colourful and welcoming. Children use the computer mouse, scissors and other small equipment such as pencils demonstrating their good hand to eye co-ordination.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about their local environment, their own culture and the culture of others through well-planned activities. They play surrounded with constructive displays that include illustrations and photographs of children from different cultures. Small world toys reflect the world they live in and promote positive images of gender and disability. Children are respected as individuals. Their work is on display all around the nursery to give children a sense of belonging and achievement. They benefit from the care taken by staff to plan interesting experiences based on what they know about each individual child's stage of development. Children and families are welcome into the setting. The detailed and well-written prospectus is available in a range of formats, such as on audio tape and Braille to make it accessible.

Children of all ages play very well together. Children receive all the help and support they need to feel part of the group. Staff show sensitivity towards children's feelings and model language and actions for them to use and learn to solve their own disputes. For example, when a number of children want to play with the same toy, a member of staff suggests they use a sand timer to decide when it is time to change places and suggest a sentence a child can use so that he asks for his turn politely. As a result, children manage their feelings and the needs of others very well. Children know the daily routines well and helpfully tidy away; learn how to develop good relationships and social competence. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents receive a wide variety of useful information about how the nursery is managed, latest government early years initiatives, and how staff implement a key worker system to ensure their children's needs are met. They are encouraged to be part of their child's learning and development right from the start. They complete an initial profile about what they know their child can already do and is interested

in. Their continued involvement is encouraged through newsletters, daily diaries and/or verbal feedback, once a term meetings, shared target setting and ideas for home learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for by suitably qualified and experienced staff who take time to attend training, which contributes to the overall quality of the provision as well as their personal development. For example, all staff hold paediatric first aid qualifications and others have attended training in topics such as behaviour management, food handling and how to use Makaton Sign Language. Children benefit from how effectively staff work together to build the supportive relationships that underpin the good practice in the nursery. Children are presented with a wide variety of well-planned, worthwhile experiences that enhance their play and learning in a friendly, welcoming environment.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. The prospectus clearly states the aims and values of the nursery. All staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities, and committed to making the children their main priority. Staff are skilled at planning experiences for children based on assessments of learning linked to accepted developmental norms. They promote inclusion for all children by presenting experiences that suit the interests of children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the provider agreed to improve and develop the use of the outside play area, to maximise learning opportunities in all areas of learning and improve systems to share information about the nurseries operational policies and procedures with parents.

The provider has created a new play area towards the entrance to the setting, but other areas require some tidying and maintenance to ensure full use of the facilities to maximise outdoor learning. The entrance hall displays are now used well to inform parents about how the setting is managed and where to go for information.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, Ofsted received one complaint relating to National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 7: Health, National Standard 8: Food & Drink, National Standard 12: Working in Partnership with Parents. Concerns raised were regarding ratios were being exceeded, children not being taken to the toilet on a regular basis, children hungry on collection by parents, and children's records not maintained in confidence.

Ofsted made a visit to the setting in 2005, where as a result five actions were set under National Standard 2, National Standard 7, National Standard 8 and National Standard 12. Ofsted was satisfied with the provider's response to these actions and that by taking these steps the provider met the National Standards, and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

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):

- makes sure staff and children follow good hygiene routines to minimise the risk of cross infection, for example by washing their hands before handling food and removing their shoes in areas where babies play on the floor
- ensure fire drills are conducted regularly to have regard for the patterns of attendance of children and staff
- make sure the outside play areas are safe and secure.

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 daily routines, such as snack time and large group activities to influence learning and ensure children remain well-occupied and interested in the activities on offer
- make use of labels and routine activities so that children begin to recognise and/or represent numerals, sounds, letter shapes and some words of personal significance to them.

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