

Dolphins Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 113462 |
| Inspection date | 14 November 2007 |
| Inspector | Shan Gwendoline Jones |
| Setting Address | 73 Chesswood Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 2AB |
| Telephone number | 01903 537755 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | Nicole Mendes |
| 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Dolphins Day Nursery is a privately owned nursery and opened in 1987. It operates from within a large semi-detached property on the east side of Worthing. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 58 children aged under five years may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 49 children on roll, of these 20 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting currently supports a number of children for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday 07:30 to 18:00 for 52 weeks of the year, excluding bank holidays. They employ 13 staff, 10 of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three staff are unqualified.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a warm, caring environment helping them feel emotionally secure. They enjoy a close relationship with staff, chatting with them easily and are confident to ask for help when they need assistance. Staff demonstrate a sound awareness of health and safety issues and follow most of the provision's health and hygiene routines. For example, staff keep all surfaces and equipment clean and hygienic. Children's health is promoted as staff remind them to wash their hands after using the toilet and prior to snack and meal times. However, soiled nappies are not immediately disposed of posing the risk of cross infection.

Children are well nourished with healthy and nutritious cooked meals and snacks that take account of their individual dietary needs, and conform to the wishes of the parents. This includes fresh fruit, chicken and vegetables. Meals are freshly cooked on the premises and the cook holds a food hygiene certificate. She understands how to store, cook and serve food safely to minimise the risk of contamination.

Children are developing a positive attitude to physical exercise which is enjoyed on a daily basis. Consideration is given by staff to extend children's learning during outdoor play. For example, children were having enormous fun digging the soil and scooping up the dry leaves. There was jovial banter between staff and children, as they played with the sand creating birthday cakes and candles. These activities also developed their concentration skills and eye and hand co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff care for children in a welcoming, secure indoor and outdoor environment. The space is organised to provide children with a range of play and learning opportunities. There is a varied range of equipment that is appropriately maintained and safe. The room is organised to enable children to access all the resources easily. Images throughout the nursery reflect diversity positively encouraging children to develop respect and tolerance.

Babies and toddlers are cared for in comfortable and homely rooms, for example, there are soft furnishings and lots of interactive toys that are easily accessible. They are well supervised as staff sit close to them on the floor and encourage them to move and explore materials and equipment safely. However, the majority of play equipment is constructed from plastic. Consequently, children do not benefit in their everyday play from experiencing natural resources and textures, such as wood, sponge, fabric and shells.

Children are kept safe as effective systems for addressing safety issues are in place. Staff effectively monitor all visitors to the setting. Children are effectively supervised as correct ratios are maintained and staff are effectively deployed. They conduct regular risk assessments and checks to ensure that the children can enjoy an environment and equipment that is well maintained. Safety policies and procedures are in place to further protect the wellbeing of the children.

Children are safeguarded from abuse or neglect. The manager has a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures. The signs and symptoms of abuse are recognised by staff, and the procedure to follow for reporting concerns is understood. However, the child

protection policy does not include the procedure to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young children are enthused by the activities provided and they are interested to learn and explore as they move around the rooms. They enjoy playing with an interesting selection of easily accessible toys and equipment including toys such as baby gym and musical boxes. The affectionate and gentle care given by staff enables babies to develop a sense of belonging and trust. Good eye contact is given to them by staff, and plenty of cuddles, so that the child understands that they are valued by and important to their carer.

Staff make very good use of the Birth to three matters framework to plan a varied range of activities and experiences. For example, young children are becoming competent learners, as they self-select activities such as puzzles and threading helping to increase their manipulative skills. Staff know the children well as they talk about how each child is progressing and plan for their next step in development. Staff recognise the value of play in a child's development and introduce a very good range of experiences both indoors and outdoors. This enables all children to learn to play and work together in large and small groups as well as independently.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good, children enjoy their learning and are keen to try new experiences. Children are progressing very well because of the staff's good knowledge of the stepping stones and how children learn. An effective system is in place for the planning of activities. A new system has been developed to keep a record of children's progress and achievements. However, the current observations and assessments systems do not sufficiently inform the next planning stage to track the children's progress and targets within the stepping stones.

Children concentrate well at chosen or adult-led activities such as role play or story-time. They are confident and enthusiastic as they rush to take part in outdoor play or to organise their role play. They learn to take turns and to share resources such as tricycles or the sand tray. Older children become aware of the needs of younger children and help them, as most of the children integrate for periods throughout the day, this gives all the children a sense of belonging. Children are very articulate and enjoy discussing what they are doing and contributing their own experiences to a discussion. They enjoy books, children are captured by the book of dinosaurs, each shared what they knew about the different ones pictured. In the book corner one child 'reads' to three others who listened intently as she tells the story from the pictures. Children are learning to read and write. Many are able to recognise letters and know the sounds they make.

Children make very good progress in their maths development. Staff use planned activities and every incidental opportunity to extend their counting and problem solving skills. For example, a three-year-old was encouraged to count the pots which were labelled up to ten, she achieved this task with ease. Children are using lots of mathematical language during their play, for example, to describe size and position. They are solving mathematical problems as they sort various objects by type and colour. Children enjoy weighing ingredients for the weekly cooking activities.

Through displays, activities and themed projects children develop positive attitudes and appreciation of the customs and cultures of others. Children are developing their physical skills as they handle tools, such as brushes, glue spreaders and scissors. They also have tremendous fun developing large motor skills by joining in organised musical movement sessions. They mimic the actions of the songs with staff while singing at the top of their voices.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have time to reflect during quiet moments. They are learning to manage their own behaviour and they are kind and considerate towards each other. Children are finding out about their own and other people's culture and beliefs as they celebrate different festivals, for example, Diwali. Children particularly enjoy acting out aspects of Chinese new year by learning to use chopsticks. They have access to a sufficient range of toys and resources which promotes their understanding of the world they live in, such as books, dressing up, puzzles, small world toys and different types of music. Therefore, children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children who have learning difficulties and disabilities receive good support. Management and staff work closely with parents and other professionals. This ensures that children's individual needs are well met. The member of staff nominated as the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is trained to assess children who may require additional support. The staff work with other agencies when necessary to benefit children.

The partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the close partnership developed between parents and staff and the value staff place on gaining parents' input. Children's individual progress and achievements are discussed and shared through regular meetings with key workers and a written report. There is strong focus on the daily exchange of information both verbal and written between staff and parents. A daily information sheet is provided each which highlights what they have eaten and activities that they have enjoyed. A parents' room is available where parents can stay and also meet with other parents. Parents spoken to on the day of the inspection spoke very highly about the nursery. They are very happy with the care, education and the progress their children are making.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The recruitment procedure is robust and all staff are checked by the criminal records bureau. Nearly all staff working with children hold a childcare and first aid qualification. There is good deployment of staff to ensure their welfare and safety is monitored. The management team and staff have some knowledge of the national standards for day care. However, some of the policies and procedures lack the necessary details. For example, the child protection policy and the complaints procedure.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. The staff team is led by a manager who is a good role model and is committed to the promotion of good quality childcare. She encourages her staff to increase their skills through further training, and gives them good support, both informally on a daily basis and formally through staff appraisals and meetings. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and they effectively support the children's learning and development. In addition, the manager and her staff value the input from the mentor from the local authority to support their delivery of nursery education.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to increase staff's knowledge and understanding of how to plan for and assess children under three years. Staff have attended training on the birth to three matters framework and incorporated this into the planning and assessment systems.

At the last nursery education inspection three points for consideration were made; to increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones to challenge and extend the more able children, in particular relating to mathematical development; evaluate the deployment of staff, structure of the routine and grouping of children to ensure children have opportunities to access all areas of learning; ensure children's assessments are used to inform planning and provide opportunities for parents to discuss and contribute to children's achievements and progress.

External and in house training was organised for staff on the foundation stage; the planning was reviewed to incorporate how they meet the needs of the less and more able children in the curriculum; mathematical development has been developed and staff use every day routines and activities to promote this area of learning; the structure and routine of the setting has been changed and the funded children have more choice and free flow between the three play rooms; children's assessments have been developed, although this area requires further development; staff observe the children and their individual interests are incorporated into the plans; parents are actively encouraged to participate in nursery activities and exchange if information is a two way process with sharing of ideas of how to extend their learning at home.

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 complaint 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 that nappy changing procedures are further developed for children to ensure that they are protected from cross contamination and the spread of infection
- gain further awareness of the national standards for day care and ensure all of the policies reflect the current legislation in particular; the complaints procedure and the child protection policy
- enable children in the baby room to experience heuristic play equipment and resources that include natural materials such as wood, shells and fabrics

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):

- consider ways to develop observation and record keeping to clearly show how children are making progress in their learning and the targets for future development

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