

Magic Roundabout Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	156213
Inspection date	14 March 2008
Inspector	Sandra Daniels / Samantha Smith
Setting Address	Roberts Hall, 161 Wadham Road, London, E17 4HU
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Registered person	Magic Roundabout Nurseries Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Magic Roundabout Day Nursery is one of a small chain of nurseries sited in the Bristol, Docklands and Stockwell area. It opened in 1995 and operates from eight rooms in a purpose-built building. It is situated behind a row of shops in a busy semi-residential area on the Walthamstow and Chingford border. A maximum of 120 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 19.00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 55 children aged under five years on roll. Of these 28 children receive funding for nursery education. Children are received from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 23 staff. All of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications or are working towards them.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because staff follow some current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, practitioners and visitors wear soft shoes in the baby rooms where children are crawling and playing on the floor. Staff wear protective clothing when serving food and when changing babies' nappies to reduce the risk of cross-infection. Practitioners help children to become aware of managing their own personal care. Children are encouraged to wash their hands after toileting, messy or garden play as part of their day to day routine. The older children are given independence to use the toilets and hand basins on their own, taking responsibility for their own cleanliness. Several practitioners hold current first aid certificates and are confident in their ability to deal with minor accidents and medical emergencies. Accidents are generally appropriately recorded and shared with parents.

Children are well nourished and have regular meals, snacks and drinks throughout the day. Children's dietary requirements are met by the nursery and parents are made aware of the weekly menu by a notice placed on the board. Meals are prepared and cooked on the premises using mostly fresh ingredients. Children enjoy sociable meal times, using real cutlery and learning how to behave at the table. Babies are held or made comfortable by staff while being bottle-fed and all the necessary sterilising equipment is used by staff when preparing feeds. Babies' food and milk intake is carefully monitored and recorded and this information is shared with parents.

All age groups have access to a large, enclosed outside play area, benefiting from the low-impact surface. Children learn to move with confidence as they ride wheeled toys, climb, run and jump. All rooms have quiet areas where children can rest and babies and toddlers usually sleep after lunch. Babies benefit from the use of a separate sleep room where they are closely monitored by staff.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into a secure premises. Staff complete daily risk assessments to minimise any potential hazards and this assists them to keep the children safe both inside and outside of the premises. The rooms are bright, well decorated and the natural light from the windows allows children to see the sky and what is going on outside of their rooms. Children's artwork is displayed which increases their self-esteem as they understand that their work is appreciated.

Children are able to use child-sized tables and chairs and access toys that are stored at their own level. This freedom to choose allows children flexibility in their play. The resources are generally in good condition and provide children with opportunities to investigate and challenge themselves. Toys are rotated and any broken equipment is repaired or removed. Children were seen to take interest in the activities.

Staff are aware of the comprehensive health and safety policies. Risk assessments are also completed if outings are arranged. The outside area is free of any poisonous plants as it is has a rubberised surface. There is a clear fire evacuation procedure and this is practised with the children at regular intervals. Attention is paid to maintaining ratios assisting the supervision of children, activities involving water, are closely monitored. Consent forms for the application

of sunscreen, taking photographs and the safe collection of children are in place. These measures help staff to ensure that children are protected from harm. Staff members also actively encourage the children to keep themselves safe and boundaries are set within the nursery to prevent children having accidents. For example, they learn not to run with objects in their hands and to play safely with the toys.

The group has a comprehensive child protection policy in place and some members of staff have completed additional training. The updated safeguarding information is on file and staff understand their personal responsibility for keeping children safe and the agencies involved in protecting children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the nursery. Their confidence grows as they become familiar with the routine and the adults who care for them. Children feel good about themselves as they see their work displayed around the setting and look at photographs of themselves at play. The settling-in process is flexible and tailored to children's individual needs. Staff have an awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and they use this to plan for the needs of younger children. Staff include young children well in activities ensuring they are suitable for their ages and differing abilities. For example, babies thoroughly enjoy listening to music as they play with shape sorters, puzzles and books. Younger children enjoy sticking and painting as they are supported by staff. Practitioners are aware of children's individual needs and provide some activities for them which are interesting and stimulating.

There are satisfactory systems in place to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities. Children demonstrate confidence as their self-esteem is promoted through the daily routines. They receive plenty of praise and encouragement which helps to promote positive attitudes to future learning. Children develop their natural curiosity as learners, sharing their ideas and asking questions such as 'why', 'when' and 'how'. Through the daily routine they enjoy opportunities to develop their language skills with each other and staff. Children are able to concentrate for short periods of time, for example, whilst using construction materials.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a basic knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Planning for the curriculum takes place but not all practitioners are clear about the learning intentions of some of the activities provided. Outcomes for children are somewhat compromised because of this. Children's developmental progress records are maintained by key workers, however, they do not always show an accurate record of achievements and progress made. The learning environment is organised to cover all six areas of learning and is suited to the needs of the children in general. Planning does not, however, reflect how children's individual learning needs will be met. Practitioners use some different methods of teaching to help children make progress towards the early learning goals. They ask children questions which encourage them to think and provide some activities which help children to acquire and develop new skills. For example, children enjoy experimenting with sand and water; pouring, measuring and talking as they play.

Children enjoy opportunities to develop their independence as they wash their hands, pour drinks and choose toys and games for themselves. They play together in small groups and begin

to learn to consider the feelings of others. Children are developing confidence in their language skills as they share experiences and interests at circle times, taking turns in conversations. Most older children are able to recognise their own names and some are able to write them independently or copy them. Resources around the room are labelled with words and pictures so that children become used to recognising familiar words.

Children begin to use mathematical language in their play, however, there are missed opportunities for children to further their skills in this area in daily routines such as snack and meal times. Children learn to recognise two dimensional shapes and name them as they look at books and play games. They develop their knowledge and understanding of the world as they enjoy using the computer and a small selection of programmable toys.

Children enjoy physical activity and begin to develop an understanding of the changes that happen to their bodies and what it means to be healthy. They develop control and co-ordination as they play outside in the garden. Children confidently climb, balance, run and jump. Children use their imagination as they play in the role-play area, recreating experiences with their friends.

Children are making progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals in all areas of the curriculum. However, practitioners do not always know what children already know and what they can already do at the time they become eligible for the funded nursery education. This means that some children are not fully supported during transition periods when they move from one group to the next. Children's confidence and self-esteem is raised as they receive praise and encouragement for their efforts and achievements.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Older children are beginning to be aware that we have similarities and differences and are starting to value each other's abilities. There are some resources on site reflecting diversity in the community such as dolls, books and small world figures. Boys and girls have equal access to resources. Discriminatory remarks are challenged through discussion. There is a policy and a designated person in place whom staff and parents can consult for advice.

There is an awareness of the needs of children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. There is a designated member of staff who has completed training and she liaises with the local authority area worker. Adaptations are made to ensure that children can use the building with ease and staff ensure that all children are included in the activities.

Children behave well, respecting each other, their surroundings and the boundaries set by the staff. There is a general emphasis on positive instructions that acknowledge helpfulness and courteous behaviour. Staff members understand the behaviour policy and this ensures that they deal with children of all ages consistently. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents are made welcome and access information from the staff, from letters and notice boards. The complaints procedure, which facilitates a quick resolution of any concerns between parents and carers, has been updated. Parents can liaise with their children's key workers for progress on their everyday well-being.

Partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for nursery education is satisfactory. Parents have some opportunities to be involved in the children's learning through

talking with staff about topics and activities their children do at nursery. Information about the Foundation Stage, the six areas of learning and the aims of the curriculum is provided for parents in the prospectus when their child's placement at nursery begins. However, this is not discussed in detail when children become eligible for funded nursery education, resulting in parents not being fully informed and involved. Children's development records are available to parents and meetings with key workers are arranged to share information with parents. Parents express their satisfaction with the setting and feel that their children are making good progress.

Children learn through topics about the world around them. They celebrate various festivals and investigate similarities and differences amongst people from other cultures as well as their own.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall children's needs are met. Children benefit from being cared for in a setting where staff have a sound understanding of their individual care needs. Most staff are suitably qualified and some are currently on training programmes. There are opportunities for practitioners to attend further courses in order to update and further develop their knowledge and understanding of childcare issues. Regular 'in-house' training sessions are organised at the weekends and staff and children benefit from this. Staff ratios are maintained and the nursery uses regular staff to cover for staff breaks and absences. Recruitment and vetting procedures are in place. However, these are not always effective and can lead to frequent changes in the staff team.

All required documentation is in place and is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure it remains in line with current guidelines and legislation. Policies and procedures generally work well in practice to ensure children's health, safety and well-being. Space and time are organised effectively so that children can move around freely, choosing their activity. However, the provider has agreed to review the organisation of staff deployment and routines such as meal times and outdoor play times to ensure continuity and that children are cared for by a familiar adult. The provider has a good understanding of the National Standards for care and is working hard to make improvements in some areas. Generally, Ofsted is notified of any significant event.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The setting continually reviews the standards of care and nursery education provided and management implements changes and improvements as necessary. There is a clear vision for the setting with a focus on children learning through play. Equality of opportunity is promoted well to allow all children to take an active role in the setting. Improvements made since previous inspections have had a positive effect on the quality of children's care and learning and the setting demonstrates a commitment towards future improvements.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to conduct a risk assessment on the premises identifying actions to be taken to minimize identified risks to electrical wiring, electrical sockets and light fittings. Children's safety is supported as there is now a comprehensive risk assessment in place which addresses these specific issues amongst many others. The provider also agreed to improve procedures for sharing information with parents. Children benefit from receiving continuity of care between home and nursery as systems for sharing information with parents are effective and successful. Staff make the time to speak with parents either at the beginning or the end of the day. Parents also receive regular newsletters and are kept updated about

forthcoming events. The provider has introduced 'parents' pockets', whereby notes, messages etc. can be left for those parents who do not have the time to stop and chat.

Nursery Education.

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure that staff develop a secure knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and stepping stones and receive appropriate guidance on how it can be delivered effectively to develop children's skills and extend their ideas. All staff have attended recent 'in-house' training on the Foundation Stage and have developed a sound knowledge and understanding of it. Planning covers all areas of learning and children make some progress towards the early learning goals. However, a further recommendation is raised following this inspection to ensure that children's individual needs are met through the curriculum provision.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been three complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. Concerns were raised on 20 April 2004, relating to the care of children settling into the provision, National Standards 3 and 12. The provider was asked to investigate the complaint and respond to Ofsted by 7 May 2004. Following a review of this investigation Ofsted raised a recommendation relating to National Standard 12; working in partnership with parents. The provider remains qualified for registration.

On 6 March 2006 concerns were raised about the deployment of suitably qualified staff and staffing ratios (National Standard 2 - Organisation), security of the premises (National Standard 6 - Safety) and communication with parents (National Standard 12 - Working in partnership with parents and carers). Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to the premises on 16 March 2006 and found that there had been a change in manager at the setting, staffing ratios had not been maintained, children's registers were inaccurate and the policy for managing access to the premises was not being adhered to. As a result of the visit, the following actions were set:

National Standard 1 (Suitable person): notify Ofsted about any changes to the manager;

National Standard 2 (Organisation): meet adult to child staffing ratios at all times;

National Standard 2 (Organisation): maintain accurate daily registers of all children and the persons looking after them with all required details of arrival and departure times;

National Standard 6 (Safety): maintain an effective system for managing access to the premises which includes arrival and departure procedures for staff, children, parents and any visitors.

The following recommendation was set:

National Standard 12 (Working in partnership with parents and carers): improve procedures for sharing information with parents.

Responses to these actions were received by 24 April 2006 confirming that the national standards were now being met. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Concerns were received on 15 November 2006 that a manager shouted at another member of staff in a room where children were asleep, and that a staff member was left in sole charge of

children whilst upset. These concerns relate to National Standards 1 (Suitable Person), 2 (Organisation), 3 (Care, Learning and Play) and 11 (Behaviour). We initially asked the provider to investigate these concerns and after receiving their report we conducted an unannounced visit to the provider on 03/01/2007, to assess their methods for maintaining the National Standards. At the visit we made observations, interviewed the manager and reviewed relevant documents. As a result of the visit we set one action to be complied with by 17 January 2007 and made one recommendation to improve practise. The provider remained qualified for registration

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):

- review recruitment, vetting and induction procedures to ensure that staff are suitable for their roles
- review the organisation of staff deployment and routines such as meal times and outdoor play times
- ensure Ofsted are notified of any significant event.

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 all staff have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage in order that the curriculum is planned to promote children's progress towards the early learning goals and that it meets the individual needs of all children
- review systems for identifying children's starting points and their next steps in learning, and ensure that each child is fully supported during transition periods
- provide good quality information for parents about the Foundation Stage in order that staff can work effectively together with parents to support children's education.

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