

Slough Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY283550
Inspection date	03 October 2007
Inspector	Glenda Pownall
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Registered person	Asquith Court Nurseries 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 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?

Slough Day Nursery is one of 118 nurseries run by Asquith Court Nurseries Limited. It opened in 1999 and operates from four rooms in a self contained building. It is situated on the Slough industrial estate close to Slough town centre. A maximum of 67 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 all year round. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 60 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Of these, 15 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs, and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 20 staff. The manager and 18 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are eight staff working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff throughout the nursery encourage children to develop good personal hygiene routines, for example, children wash their hands before mealtimes and staff support young children to wipe their noses appropriately. Staff frequently check and change nappies and their procedure includes wearing disposable aprons and gloves and cleaning the mat between each use. This reduces the risk of cross-infection. However, the table used by babies for mealtimes is not always cleaned before the food is served and staff do not always ensure babies' milk bottles are stored at an appropriate temperature. For example, the fridge temperature had not been recorded for two days and the thermometer indicates that the fridge temperature is 11 'warm'. This compromises the health of babies.

Detailed records are kept of accidents which happen to children on the premises and these are shared with parents. However, not all accidents that happen as a result of incidents with other children are recorded. This does not ensure that parents are fully informed of the care and treatment their children receive.

Children receive healthy balanced meals which are freshly prepared on the premises. The setting discusses with parents and records children's requirements with regard to food to ensure the individual dietary needs of children are met. Children in the Rabbits' room are able to help themselves to a snack of chopped fresh fruit and a drink of water or milk from the snack bar. This encourages them to gain understanding of their own needs.

Children have regular opportunities for physical play. However, whilst children in the Kittens' room have the opportunity to choose to play either inside or outside for much of the morning session children in the Rabbits' room are restricted to a set period of outside play. The babies in the Pooh Bears' room have sufficient space to crawl around and young children in the Tiggers' room have constant access to age and stage appropriate climbing equipment.

There is a good range of resources available outdoors. Children use balls in different ways, such as throwing into a hoop, kicking and bouncing. Children enjoy using the fixed climbing equipment in the garden and some are confident to use the fireman's pole unaided. Children pedal tricycles round the garden with skill and they run at speed avoiding other children, indicating good spatial awareness.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The written child protection procedure of the setting follows that of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, although it does not include all required local contact numbers. Most staff have a secure knowledge of child protection and know the procedures to follow if concerned a child is at risk from abuse. However, other staff are less confident and are uncertain of what signs and symptoms would cause concern. In addition, there is confusion within the staff team as to who is the designated child protection officer. This does not ensure children are fully safeguarded at all times.

All children access a good range of equipment and resources covering all areas of development. Staff make regular checks to ensure these are in a suitable condition and safe for children to use. However, at times babies are put in bouncer style chairs that are not appropriate for their

stage of development. For example as a baby pulls herself forward the back legs leave the floor and this unbalances the chair. This compromises the safety of babies.

Children are cared for in a clean, tidy and well maintained environment where they have sufficient space to move around and play freely. There are good procedures in place to ensure the premises are safe for children. For example, a daily risk assessment is carried out each morning and the health and safety procedures of all aspects of the nursery are checked on a rota basis. The premises are secure and all visitors use the intercom and camera entry system. This ensures that unwelcome visitors do not gain access to the nursery.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children access activities covering all areas of development. Staff generally form warm and caring relationships with children, fostering a sense of self-worth. All children have daily access to the garden and babies are regularly taken for walks in the local area. Babies are provided with resources made of a range of materials providing different sensory experiences. Children in the Tiggers' room enjoy manipulating play dough, experimenting with paint and water play. Children squeal with delight as staff pour water through a sieve which then runs over their hands. However, at times the Tiggers' room is not effectively organised and children become frustrated as they sit for over an hour in a chair during the lunchtime period. Children in the Kittens' room develop manipulative skills as they complete puzzles and dress dolls, persevering to complete the task with support. Occasionally the activities are not sufficiently supervised to provide effective support for all children to achieve. Children in the Rabbits' room enjoy using books for pleasure as staff make themselves available to read stories and respond to requests to read the story again.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff working with funded children have a secure knowledge of the early learning goals. They understand the aims of activities and how these link to the different areas of learning. Detailed, regular observations are made of children and these are used to inform future planning. However, the system does not allow staff to see an overview of the different aspects of learning observed for each child. As a result, staff do not record the progress of all children or plan for their next steps in learning in some areas, such as mathematical development.

Children develop confidence in counting as they sing number songs and rhymes. They use mathematical language with each other in their play. For example, one child holds a tape measure across the head of another child and pointing to the outstretched measure declares "you are so bigger than me". Staff sometimes intervene in children's play to reinforce what children know but they do not always take opportunities to extend children's knowledge. For example, when a child identifies the number fourteen as one and four staff do not explain what the digits represent when they are together.

Children develop independence skills as they help tidy up activities and help themselves to the snack. They are confident to speak to visitors and to stand up and sing a song in front of the whole group. Most children can identify their first names from the use of name cards and some know the initial sound of their names. Children have many opportunities to make marks due to the easy access to different writing resources around the room. For example, they use clip boards hung around the room to write on and 'write' letters, sealing them into the envelopes

provided. However, staff do not extend activities to give children the opportunity to attempt to write their own names as they automatically write it for them on their drawings and artwork.

Children are provided with some good natural resources, such as tree stumps, to support a building activity. They enjoy playing imaginatively with the wood and some work out for themselves how to extend and lock the tape measure. However, staff do not always support children to find the answers to their questions. For example, a child asks staff to identify the name of a building tool he is using, when the member of staff does not know they do not provide him with any suggestions of how he could find this out. This does not build on children's natural curiosity.

Children develop confidence in using technology as they competently select and use a drawing programme on the computer and use the controls on a CD player to turn the volume up and down. Children increase their manipulative skills through using a range of resources, such as scissors, pencils and tongs. They enjoy a range of activities to develop creativity, including dancing to music and craft activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff generally praise and encourage children's achievements at activities to foster a sense of self-worth. In most rooms staff set good examples to encourage good behaviour in children. However, staff management of children and their behaviour in one area is not consistent. As a result, this gives mixed messages to some children of how to behave appropriately. For example, when a child becomes upset and cries because another child has pushed them out of the way staff do not intervene or respond to the upset child. In addition, staff do not record all incidents with regard to children's behaviour. This does not promote the welfare of all children or develop their understanding of right from wrong.

Staff work closely with parents to identify and meet children's individual needs. Children learn about the wider world through celebrating festivals and customs. Although few outings are undertaken children learn about the local community through regular visits from the mobile library and other visitors, such as the Fire Brigade and Seeing Eye dogs. There are satisfactory procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Staff keep parents well informed about their child's daily routines and activities. They provide opportunities for parents to talk to them at either end of the day and parents of children in the Pooh Bears and Tiggers receive daily written information. The setting holds open days and parent evenings and provides annual reports of children's progress to parents. This supports continuity of care.

Partnership with parents of the nursery education is satisfactory. Parents are given verbal information about the early learning goals when their child enters the Rabbits' room and some information is displayed regarding the weekly planned activities. There is an open door policy where parents can access their children's records and speak to the key worker at any time. Parents receive written reports of their children's progress along the stepping stones, however, these reports do not always include achievements in mathematical development or the planned next steps in learning. Parents state they are happy with the care and education their children receive. They particularly like the activities provided and the staff team.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Staff are effectively deployed to ensure minimum adult to child ratios are met and the staff team in each room is generally consistent. As a result, most children are happy and settled in the nursery environment. The management has a sound knowledge of their role and responsibilities with regard to the National Standards. For example, there are clear vetting procedures in place and these ensure that people who are not vetted do not work in the nursery and there are systems in place to cover for staff absences. Staff have access to training to further their childcare qualifications and knowledge of the setting procedures. However, this does not ensure that all staff are fully aware of who has designated responsibility for specific areas within the nursery, such as behaviour management and child protection.

All required policies are in place for the safe and efficient running of the nursery. However, it is difficult for staff to easily identify the policies required specifically by the National Standards due to the very large number of policy documents and folders. The daily room registers identify to staff which children will be present at different times of the day and in addition parents also record the time children arrive and leave. Staff in the Kittens' room very occasionally forget to check that the parent record is completed as children leave. A register is kept of the times staff arrive and leave the premises. However, staff do not consistently remember to sign in and out on the room registers to further protect children.

The leadership and management of the nursery education are satisfactory. The leadership monitor the effectiveness of the nursery education curriculum through regular meetings with the room leader and company inspections and the management through observing staff practice, reviewing the children's progress records and regular meetings with staff. This is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that staff always provide sufficient support and extension for children at activities or that all children's progress along the stepping stones is planned for. The management is committed to improving the nursery education and has identified staff training, outside play and further development of the assessment system as areas for improvement.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection recommended that areas used by all the children are included in the risk assessment and that younger children have consistent carers and follow their own meal and sleep routines. All areas of the nursery are now included in the risk assessment and as far as possible younger children have continuity in the staff that care for them and are able to sleep and eat according to their own routines. This supports the wellbeing of children.

The last inspection also recommended that staff working with the funded children have a secure understanding of how children learn and plan activities to promote children's all round development. In addition, it recommended that the monitoring systems were reviewed to ensure staff provide children with experiences which enhance their learning. Since the last inspection staff have improved their knowledge of how children learn and plan a range of activities covering all aspects of learning to support children's development in all areas of the curriculum. However, staff do not always provide effective support at activities to further children's knowledge and understanding.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted received two complaints that required the provider to take action in order to meet the National Standards.

The first complaint related to National Standard 7: Health and National Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers. This involved an allegation made about the nappy changing procedures. Ofsted conducted a visit to the premises and as a result, asked the provider to take action under National Standard 2: Organisation, in relation to ensuring that there is a key worker responsible for each child's well being on a daily basis, with particular reference to nappy changing. The provider responded by ensuring there is a second key worker in the room.

The second complaint related to National Standard 2: Organisation. This involved an allegation that minimum adult:child ratios were not being met and an accurate record of children's attendance was not being maintained. Ofsted conducted a visit to the premises and, as a result, asked the provider to take action under National Standard 2: Organisation, in relation to ensuring that minimum adult:child ratios are met and that the daily records of children's attendance include the names of all persons who look after them throughout the hours of their attendance. The provider responded by reviewing the deployment of staff to ensure the minimum adult:child ratios are met at all times and monitoring the daily records of children's attendance to ensure they include the names of all persons looking after them.

The provider remains 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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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 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 health and hygiene procedures are effectively followed to ensure tables are clean for mealtimes, milk is stored at the correct temperature and all accidents recorded
- ensure the equipment used by babies is appropriate to their stage of development and all staff have a secure knowledge of child protection
- ensure young children do not sit still for long periods of time and receive sufficient support to complete activities
- ensure the behaviour management policy is consistently followed by all staff and all incidents are recorded

- ensure that the room registers are completed at all times to make certain that the record of the times children attend and the staff looking after them are always accurate, that staff know who has designated responsibility for child protection and behaviour management and consider the policies relating to the National Standards being made more easily accessible to staff.

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 staff observe and record observations and next steps in learning covering all areas of development, including mathematical development, for all children
- develop the assessment and observation systems to ensure that the progress children make along the stepping stones is easily identifiable
- provide effective support and extension at activities to ensure that all children receive sufficient challenge to develop their knowledge and understanding across all areas of learning
- enable children to have greater freedom to access the outside play area throughout the day.

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