

Merrydale Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	148617
Inspection date	07 December 2007
Inspector	Judith, Mary Butler
Setting Address	'Merrydale', Coppid Beech Hill, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 1PD
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Registered person	Kingsclere Nurseries Ltd
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?

Merrydale Day Nursery is one of seven nurseries run by Kingsclere Day Nurseries Limited. It opened in 1989 and operates from a variety of rooms in a converted detached house. It is situated on the outskirts of Wokingham, Berkshire. A maximum of 42 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to an enclosed garden for outdoor play.

There are currently 66 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Of these, 21 receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area and attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery employs 16 members of staff to work directly with the children. Of these, 12 hold appropriate qualifications and two are working towards further early years qualifications. The nursery also employ a cook and a cleaner.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children receive a range of healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. Staff discuss individual children's dietary needs and parental preferences with parents and adhere to these at all times. Parents of older children receive information about the food their child has eaten through the notice boards displaying menus and discussions with staff. Younger children are encouraged to become independent and feed themselves, staff offer support and assistance to children in these tasks and provide written feedback to parents on the food their child has eaten. Older children sit together to eat their meals and snacks, this is a sociable time when they chat to staff and each other about their day. Children have access to drinking water throughout the day.

Children enjoy a range of activities outside that assist them in developing a healthy lifestyle. Staff ensure children access fresh air each day by utilising all areas of the garden, for example, babies play in the covered sandpit during wet weather. Older children access a range of equipment and resources to develop their gross motor skills including bats, balls and sit and ride toys. They enjoy the opportunity to continue their play outside with a range of equipment, including paint brushes and water and construction toys. They are confident in their surroundings and move with ease around all areas of the building and outside areas, negotiating both fixed and moving objects.

Older children are adept in their personal skills and go to the toilet unaided and wash their hands. Staff offer gentle reminders and assistance to children who are learning these skills, however, children are not always requested to wash their hands before snack time. Staff follow effective procedures to ensure the health of children, such as wearing gloves when changing nappies. The premises are clean and staff undertake regular cleaning tasks, including washing the equipment and toys. Children who require sleeps do so in cots or on mattresses and bedding is individual to each child. Staff discuss the individual routines of babies with parents to ensure they follow their normal sleeping patterns within the nursery. There are effective procedures in place to record the administration of medication and all accidents. The manager oversees the completion of all paperwork and parents are requested to countersign each entry. This ensures they are aware of any incidents that have happened to their child.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff greet children and parents as they arrive and this enables children to enter happily and settle quickly into the nursery routine. Children access a good variety of toys and activities within their daily routines and confidently select from the range set up. Staff rotate these to ensure children receive a wide variety each day. Staff ensure toys and resources are in good repair and suitable for the age and stage of the children, by sorting, washing and replacing them as required.

Staff undertake regular safety checks within the nursery to ensure the safety of children; however, radiators in some areas of the nursery are very hot. Daily safety checks in the garden ensure the safety of children when they play outside. Regular risk assessments are undertaken and cover all areas of the nursery. Children develop an awareness of keeping themselves safe,

for example, they know what they need to do when practising evacuation procedures. Visitors to the nursery are supervised at all times.

Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding children procedures and the signs and symptoms of child abuse. New staff are aware that they would need to discuss concerns with senior staff within the rooms they work in. Management and senior staff have attended safeguarding children training and this enhances the welfare of children within the nursery.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are comfortable and secure in the nursery environment. Staff offer a high level of support to those children who require assistance in leaving their main carer. Parents and staff share information prior to the children starting nursery or changing rooms. This ensures staff are able to meet the individual needs of each child. Staff working with younger children use the Birth to Three matters framework to provide children with varied and fun activities. They undertake observations and use these alongside photographs to record children's progress and development. Babies select toys and resources from the variety set up by staff. Staff assist babies in learning new tasks, for example, supporting them when they are sitting on the carpet with other children and responding to their baby talk. All children receive a high level of interaction from the staff and enjoy this in one to one, small and large group situations.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff use the Foundation Stage to effectively plan and deliver an interesting and fun curriculum for children. Children make good progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Children are sociable and enjoy interacting with adults and other children. They take turns to listen and speak at group times, they are keen to share objects from home at 'show and tell time' and chat to staff and other children about these. Children are well behaved and share the toys and resources, for example, taking turns to pour the water from the jug to fill the cups in the water tray. Children are developing their independence, however this is not always encouraged through every day activities and the daily routines. Children handle books with care and have many opportunities to sit and look at books individually or with staff during their day. They are confident in recognising their names and enjoy mark making in a variety of different situations inside and outside in the garden, for example, using the paint brushes and chinks to make marks on the wall and patio area. Children's imaginative skills develop through a range of different experiences, such as, singing, role play and art and craft activities.

Children learn about the world around them through a variety of different topics and themes, such as Chinese New Year and Eid. They are confident in their use of information technology equipment and older children use the mouse to expertly navigate their way round simple computer programmes. The nursery garden provides children with opportunities to grow and care for living things. Children enjoy this time the garden, for example, working with staff to pull up the runner beans and prepare the pots for more plants. Children use numbers and simple calculation confidently in every day situations, for example, counting the number of girls at group time and adding one more when another person joins the group. Children use numbers and count together while playing, for example, counting up to five when playing at the computer. They use mathematical language in their everyday play, such as half full, bigger and smaller while playing in the sand and water. Children are confident in their physical skills and use a

range of tools effectively and with skill, these include play dough cutters, scissors and mark making equipment including chinks, pens, pencils and brushes.

Staff talk to parents about their child and this enables them to gain a good knowledge about individual children's routines, preferences and family backgrounds. Effective procedures are in place to record children's development through observations and photographs. These are used to update individual children's development records and clearly identify their next stapes in learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff know the individual children very well. This ensures that they are able to meet the needs of all children in the setting. Children establish firm relationships with staff and other children. They often seek out their friends during play situations, for example, while playing in the sandpit outside. Children behave well and respond to the reminders offered by the staff team. They are aware of the expectations for behaviour and discuss these at group times, for example, one child tells other children why they can not sit on the table. Siblings have opportunities to spend time together at the beginning and end of the day. Older children like to entertain and spend time with the babies, holding their hands and chatting to them. Children are confident and develop their self esteem through praise and encouragement from staff. Individual children's art work is displayed effectively around the nursery areas and shared with parents. Children have access to a range of resources, topics and themes to reflect the diverse society and learn about the world around them. All children are included, valued and have their individual needs met. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership between parents and carers is good. Staff and parents work together to ensure children make the transition from home to nursery smoothly. They verbally share information about the child at the beginning and end of the day. This ensures staff are able to meet the individual needs of all children in their care. Staff record details regarding the daily routines of babies in writing and this information is given to parents when they collect their child. Regular newsletters, discussion and notice boards ensure parents receive information about current themes and topics; however they do not receive information about the Foundation Stage or Birth to three Matters. Parents have opportunities to attend regular parents evenings to view their child's developmental records, see their work and discuss their child with the staff team. The nursery operates an open door policy and welcomes parents into the nursery at all time. Parents speak very highly of the setting and staff.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff make good use of the available space in the nursery. Children are confident and move with ease around all areas of the nursery identified for their use. The nursery is well maintained, clean, welcoming and warm for children and parents. Policies and procedures are in place and staff are aware of their individual roles and responsibilities within the nursery. Children's times and days of attendance are accurately recorded and staff supervise all visitors to the setting. All of the required documentation is in place and staff follow effective procedures when completing paperwork, for example, ensuring parents see and countersign all accident reports. A robust recruitment process is in place and this ensures the health, safety and welfare of children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are good. Staff show a good awareness of early years guidance including the Foundation Stage, the Birth to three Matters framework and the National Standards. All staff are involved in the planning process and children receive an interesting, fun and varied curriculum. Staff attend regular meetings and use these to discuss planning, daily routines and individual children. Effective procedures are followed to record children's progress and identify their next steps in learning. Staff evaluate activities and use this to inform future planning. They identify their individual strengths and weaknesses and have annual appraisals. Staff have regular opportunities to attend training sessions to update their individual knowledge and skills.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection for day care there were four issues to be addressed. These related to implementing a suitable range of age and stage appropriate activities for babies. The setting was also requested to ensure confidentiality with regard to children's medication and accident records, develop risk assessments to minimise risks to children and ensure the complaints procedure was shared with parents.

Since the last inspection the setting have implemented planning for babies, who now receive a range of age and stage appropriate activities within their daily routine. Procedures have been developed within the nursery to ensure confidentiality of all accident and medication records. Effective risk assessments are undertaken and reviewed annually and this enhances the safety for children in the nursery. Parents receive information about the complaints procedure through the notice board, parent poster and handbook.

At the last inspection for nursery education there were two issues to be addressed. These related to developing opportunities to record numbers independently and mark make within every day situations.

Since the last inspection children now have opportunities to record numbers and use numbers in every day situation, children access drawing and mark making materials within their daily routines in all areas of the nursery and outside play area.

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 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):

- ensure children wash their hands before all snacks and meals
- ensure radiators do not pose a danger to children
- further improve information to parents to provide them with information about the curriculum offered to their child (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):

- provide further opportunities for children to develop their independence and complete tasks for themselves

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